

**Leadership Formation**  
**Through Theological Field Education**

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by  
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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	viii
Acknowledgments.....	x
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Theological Field Education Prepares Religious Leaders .....	1
The Problem Within Theological Field Education .....	1
Goals for the Study .....	3
Methodology for the Study .....	3
Summary of the Dissertation .....	4
Conclusion.....	5
<b>Chapter 2: Methodology.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Introduction .....	6
Statement of the Problems .....	6
Goals for the Study .....	7
Description of Methodologies .....	8
Overview of the Study.....	8
The Three Phases of the Study.....	8
Summary of How the Three Phases Built the Study Results.....	10
Methodology .....	11
Method One: Grounded Research.....	11
Method Two: Participatory Action Research.....	17
Summary of Research Methods .....	20
The Phases of the Study .....	21
Phase One .....	21
Phase Two .....	37
Phase Three .....	41

<b>Chapter 3: Overview of Theological Field Education .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Introduction .....	44
A Religious Leader's Most Important Capacity Is to Reflect .....	44
Ministerial Leaders Face Challenging Conditions.....	47
Theological Field Education Employs Three Educational Components to Teach Reflection on Experience .....	47
The Importance of Understanding What Actually Happens in TFE Programs .....	48
Theological Field Education's Purposes .....	49
Theological Field Education's Main Purpose Is the Preparation of Religious Leaders .....	49
Association for Theological Schools Guidelines .....	50
How Theological Field Education Program Materials Describe Program Purposes .....	51
Summary of Purposes .....	52
Description of Theological Field Education.....	53
Field Education Case: Josephine.....	53
Variations on Josephine's Example Within Theological Field Education .....	59
How Elements Are Included in Programs .....	59
Full-time Internships vs. Part-Time Concurrent Internships.....	59
Variations in Reflective Practica .....	61
The Educational Relationship Between the Intern and Laypersons .....	62
How Supervisors Teach Students .....	62
Types of Placements .....	63
Level of Staffing and the Roles of Field Educators.....	63
Conclusion.....	64
<b>Chapter 4: The Key Elements of Field Education .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Introduction .....	67
Description of the Field Educator .....	68
Definition of the Term: Field Educator.....	68
Variations on How the Role of Field Educator Is Configured .....	71
Summary of the Field Educator .....	77

The Field Education Reflective Practicum .....	78
Introduction .....	78
Definition of the Term: Reflective Practicum .....	78
Vocabulary Used in Relation to the Term: Reflective Practicum .....	79
Variations on How the Seminar Is Configured .....	80
Conclusion re: Reflective Practicum .....	86
The Field Education Handbook .....	87
Introduction .....	87
How the Study Gathered Information about the Uses and Purposes for	
Handbooks .....	87
The Contents of Handbooks .....	88
The Use and Purposes of Handbooks .....	89
Gaps between Manuals and Actual Practices .....	91
The Supervisor .....	92
The Role of the Supervisor .....	92
Training of Supervisors .....	93
Establishment of Mentoring Relationships .....	94
The Relationship between the Field Education Program and the Curriculum ....	95
Conclusion .....	97
<b>Chapter 5: Reflecting Through Mentoring .....</b>	<b>98</b>
Introduction .....	98
Overview of the Use of Models .....	98
Overview of the Three Models in This Study .....	99
The Reality of Forced Choice in Developing Educational Strategies .....	100
Overview of the Reflecting Through Mentoring Model .....	101
Description of How Field Education Works in the Mentoring Model .....	102
Three Programs That Emphasize Mentoring for Theological Reflection .....	105
Introduction to the Three Programs .....	105
Fuller Theological Seminary .....	106
The Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago .....	108
Luther Seminary .....	110
Key Pedagogical Questions .....	112

The Pedagogy of the Mentoring Model.....	112
What Is the Primary Learning Environment?.....	114
Who Is the Main Instructor for Field Education? .....	115
Who Evaluates the Student?.....	117
What Is the Role of the Field Education Department?.....	118
What Is the Learning Relationship Between Abstract and Embodied Ideals? .....	119
Conclusion.....	121
<b>Chapter 6: Reflecting Through Practica Model .....</b>	<b>122</b>
Introduction .....	122
Overview of Reflecting Through Practicum Model.....	122
Description of How Field Education Works in the Practicum Model.....	123
The Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry.....	126
General Description of the School .....	126
Field Education Program Staff .....	127
The Field Education Program's Use of Theological Reflection Practica.....	128
Other Aspects of the Field Education Program at the STM .....	131
Why the STM Field Education Program Is Part of the Practicum Model .....	131
Union Theological Seminary .....	132
General Description of the School .....	132
Field Education Program Staff.....	133
The Field Education Program's Use of Theological Reflection Practica.....	133
Why Union Is Part of the Practicum Model .....	134
Claremont School of Theology .....	135
General Description of the Claremont School of Theology .....	136
The Field Education Staff.....	137
How CST Incorporates the Reflective Practica.....	137
Other Aspects of the Field Education Program at CST.....	140
How This Model Resolves Five Pedagogical Questions.....	142
The Pedagogy of the Practicum Model .....	142
What Is the Primary Learning Environment?.....	145
Who Teaches, or Is the Main Instructor? .....	146

Who Evaluates the Student?.....	147
What Is the Role of the Field Education Program?.....	148
Abstract vs. Embodied Ideals.....	149
Conclusion.....	150
<b>Chapter 7: The Reflecting Through Curriculum Integration Model .....</b>	<b>152</b>
Introduction .....	152
Five Basic Areas That Are Part of the Literature of Integrative Teaching and Learning .....	153
Definition of What Happens in the <i>Reflecting Through Curricular Integration</i> Model for Field Education .....	156
Schools That Are Representative of the Reflecting Through Curricular Integration Model .....	159
Denver Seminary.....	160
General Description of the Seminary .....	160
The Field Education Program Staff at Denver .....	161
The Field Education Program at Denver .....	162
Why Denver Seminary Is Included in the Reflection Through Curricular Integration Model .....	162
Conclusion.....	163
Western Theological Seminary .....	164
General Description of the Seminary .....	164
The Field Education Staff.....	164
How Western Coordinates Its Field-based Learning with the Overall Curriculum .....	165
Conclusion.....	167
Harvard Divinity School.....	168
General Description of Harvard Divinity School .....	168
The Field Education Program Staff at Harvard.....	168
How Harvard's Field Education Program Relates to the Overall Curriculum .....	169
Conclusion.....	170
Five Pedagogical Questions .....	171

The Pedagogy of the Reflecting Through Curricular Integration Model.....	171
What Is the Primary Location for Learning?.....	172
Who Are the Main Teachers? .....	173
Who Evaluates?.....	175
What Is the Relationship Between Field Education and the Rest of the Curriculum?.....	175
The Meaning of Integration in Education.....	177
Summary of Seminars That Engage Integrative Learning Through TFE .....	177
Conclusion.....	181
<b>Chapter 8: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>182</b>
Introduction .....	182
The Existing Diversity of Methods, Purposes, and Structures in TFE.....	182
Who Teaches Ministerial Reflection? .....	184
A Need for Further Scrutiny of the Formation Process for Field Educators .....	187
Further Study Related to the Three Categories Identified in This Project.....	189
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix A: Survey .....	191
Appendix B: Table of Respondents .....	194
Appendix C: Titles for Field Educators .....	198
Appendix D: Original Schema .....	200
Appendix E: Regional Gatherings .....	203
Appendix F: Participants in Newport Beach, California Gathering .....	204
Appendix G: Participants in Nashville, Tennessee Gathering .....	205
Appendix H: Literature review .....	206
Notes .....	233
Bibliography .....	257

## **Abstract**

### **Leadership Formation Through Theological Field Education**

By

Emily Click

This dissertation addresses the problem that little study has been conducted of the methods and practices of theological field education. It documents how theological field education programs build learning environments for students, and for what purposes. Using combined methods of grounded research and participatory action research, the study built a descriptive compendium of the essential components that comprise field education programs. The study also identified three predominant pedagogical models used by field education programs to engage students in contextualized learning. Finally, the dissertation developed a vocabulary that field educators could utilize to enable better communication on issues of greatest concern within theological field education.

The study was conducted through several phases, using a recursive method. It began with a survey, and continued with gatherings of field educators who both received and helped interpret data. This then led to further data collection by the researcher, who returned once again to report to field educator participants and to receive their input. This recursive method of gathering, reporting and interpreting data in conversation with participants, enabled the construction of an ongoing conversation within field education about the basic methods and purposes that guide our work in each of our settings.

The researcher concluded by positing that there are three basic pedagogical models that describe most of the ways programs function within theological education. These are the reflecting through mentoring, reflecting through practica and the reflecting

through curricular integration models. The researcher called for follow up studies to determine the ways in which these descriptive categories might represent best practices in particular situations. The researcher did not conclude that any one category represented a superior model of how to construct field education. Instead, the study suggests that each setting must determine which aspects of their program will receive the greatest emphasis and attention.

The study's fundamental purpose was to describe the ways in which theological field education programs prepare leaders for the important and challenging work of leading religious communities.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### Theological Field Education Prepares Religious Leaders

This report documents how theological schools prepare religious leaders through theological field education (TFE) programs.<sup>1</sup> Field education programs have long been part of M.Div. degree requirements at most theological schools. These programs engage students in placements that help them learn to become pastors, teachers, and chaplains.<sup>2</sup> The significance of TFE lies in the way it often plays a crucial role in preparing ministerial leaders to respond faithfully in challenging circumstances.<sup>3</sup> The questions at the heart of this study consider how theological schools offer students educational opportunities that prepare them to lead in ministerial environments that are unpredictable and complex.<sup>4</sup> We know that today's churches and society are full of the kinds of demanding situations that require careful and faithful preparation of leaders. Therefore it is important that we understand the role of TFE in fostering professional formation for ministry.

#### The Problem Within Theological Field Education

Theological field education is at the core of efforts by schools to prepare leaders by combining traditional classroom studies with practical experiential learning. Yet little has been known about precisely how TFE programs build learning environments for students. There has been little research aimed at documenting the methods and purposes

of TFE. This lack of information about TFE is the fundamental problem addressed in this study. The shortage of study about TFE has hindered the development of theory about the educational practices of TFE. Furthermore, field educators have been unable to learn from each other as fully as they might if they had access to a shared database of information and common vocabulary about their field.

A researcher would, for example, have no obvious way to resolve questions like: “are most TFE programs basically like the program at Luther Seminary in Minneapolis, where students take a full year away from the school after their second year of study to prepare for ministry within a congregation?” They would similarly be unable to determine the answer to the question, “are TFE programs usually more like the one at Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry, where students engage in part-time ministry placements that become instruments for learning within a carefully crafted reflective seminar?” The inquirer is left with no way to resolve confusion over which, if either, represents the preponderance of field education programs.

Perhaps even more significantly, there is no established way to compare the effectiveness of differing programs. This makes it difficult to address questions such as “which program is best suited to the contextual needs of its community?” Or, “how can an institution best design a TFE program that is coherent with its mission and philosophy?” Or, “which program best prepares leaders for the missions they intend to serve?” We have been unable to address these types of questions because we have too little information about the ways schools approach the task of ministerial formation through experiential education. The current paucity of published research material on

TFE makes it difficult for the investigator to know where to look for an accurate understanding of the options for forming religious leaders.

### Goals for the Study

These problems led to the formation of the following goals for the study:

1. Develop a descriptive compendium of the essential components that comprise a field education program.
2. Identify the three predominant pedagogical models used by field education programs to engage students in contextualized learning.
3. Develop a vocabulary that field educators can agree on that will enable them to communicate on the issues that matter most to them.

This project engaged an insider, a field educator, in research about the ways students prepare for ministerial leadership in theological schools. The study produced a volume of information about the essential practices of TFE. It developed models that help articulate the educational theories that guide field educators. Finally, a series of gatherings of field educators provided an opportunity for a greater level of sharing and learning within that community.

### Methodology for the Study

The researcher gathered information on over thirty TFE programs by using qualitative research approaches. Inductive techniques helped build the description of essential elements. This use of explicatory techniques stands in contrast to a quantitative research approach. In quantitative study, the researcher develops an initial hypothesis

that then is tested by measurable observations. As a replacement for coming to the data with an hypothesis, this study began with listening procedures that eventually led to a report characterized by thick description. Thus, attentiveness formed the fundamental base for this research. Then the researcher drew conclusions from the information amassed through a series of listening projects.

### Summary of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 gives a detailed report of the methodologies used to gather and interpret information. The remainder of the dissertation has two major sections. The first section maps the terrain of TFE. This section begins with Chapter 3, which provides the reader with an overview of the subject of the study. The overview states the purposes of TFE, and then gives a sample case of a fictional field education student. Chapter 3 makes it possible for the reader to appreciate the subsequent chapter, which gives the results of research into five elements most commonly found in TFE programs. That chapter covers these five commonly encountered elements of TFE, which are:

1. the field education director,
2. the supervisor,
3. the field education practicum,
4. the relationship between the field education program and the wider theological school curriculum, and
5. the field education manual.

This delineation of these five aspects of TFE is necessary because there are many unspoken, undocumented, and sometimes unfounded assumptions about field education.

The second section of the dissertation presents the three primary pedagogical models used by field education programs throughout theological schools. These models show the pedagogical assumptions behind teaching in field education. I have developed these models in order to give a conceptual framework for the ways programs combine and emphasize the essential elements of field education in three basic ways. The first model is called *Reflecting Through Mentoring*, the next model is called *Reflecting Through Practica*, and the final model is called *Reflecting Through Curricular Integration*. These three models form the basis for three chapters which also contain case descriptions of actual field education programs associated with each model.

### Conclusion

This study addresses a crucial deficit within field education, a lack of research into its methods and purposes. The study presents research into five essential elements of TFE. It then helps the reader to identify basic trends in how schools combine these elements by proposing three pedagogical models for TFE. The study also helps build a common vocabulary among field educators in a way that fosters a growing culture of research, reflection and dialog.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### Introduction

The study addresses a fundamental problem for those who teach field education. The goals of the study flow directly from the problem. And the methods derive from those goals.

#### Statement of the Problems

The fundamental problem addressed by this study is that there is no good study of field education. This means there is no existing database of basic information, such as what happens in a typical program, and what might be the variations on a basic format for field education. No survey has been conducted to compile data on the educational backgrounds of field educators, their faculty status and roles, and how they prepared to become field educators. There has been no collection of descriptions of field education seminars, ways students are supervised, and what the relationship might be between field education and the rest of the M.Div. curriculum at various theological schools. These types of basic information about field education are simply unavailable to someone interested in studying field education in a theological school.

A second, related problem is that there is no catalog of pedagogies for field education. Because there has never been a study focused on what educational practices are actually employed in TFE programs, it has not been possible to identify the predominate categories of pedagogical approaches. Instead, there has been an assumption that all TFE programs are essentially the same, striving for the same

educational purposes. Yet it has not been possible to verify that programs are similar or different, and in what ways. Thus a researcher interested in a comparative study of pedagogies in TFE has no basic data on which to base such a study.

A third and noteworthy problem is the reality that there is no agreement on basic vocabulary within TFE. This means that field educators use terms to signify dramatically different phenomenon, but have no lexicon to clearly define similarities and differences in the use of terms. So, for example, one field educator might say “reflection” is important, by which they mean to point to theological reflection. Another field educator might agree “reflection” is important, but they might, instead, be pointing to the significance of reflecting in a way that brings head and heart and spirit together. This is but one example of a large number of phrases that are in common use within TFE, but have not been uniformly defined.

Therefore, there is no way for field educators to do communal reflection on their own work without talking past each other. Field educators who try to discuss their work often experience a frustration of seeming to talk about the same topic with similar language, only to discover they are confused about what the other field educator actually means when using similar terminology. Field educators who try to engage in reflection on key issues within TFE may actually find themselves talking past each other.

### Goals for the Study

This study seeks to provide the building blocks necessary for field educators to reflect communally on the work of TFE. Specifically, the study will:

1. Develop a compendium that describes the most frequently found elements of TFE.

This will create a baseline for reflective conversation.

2. Describe the pedagogical methods currently used in TFE. This will provide a way for field educators to compare pedagogies across programs.
3. Discover a vocabulary that field educators can agree on. This will prevent field educators from talking past each other.

### Description of Methodologies

#### Overview of the Study

This chapter will fully describe the methodologies employed throughout the study. These methodologies include grounded research and participatory action research (PAR). However, before introducing these methodological processes, it is necessary to explain how the study took place over three chronologically distinct phases. In order to give the reader an overview of how the entire project was structured, we will begin with a brief outline of what took place during each phase of the study. Then we will return to a more detailed description of the methodologies employed, and their rationalization. Finally, the chapter will elaborate in greater detail what happened during each phase of the study.

#### The Three Phases of the Study

The study followed a recursive method. A three step method was applied to each phase of research, with the results of one phase becoming the input for the next. The three steps involved

1. listening to field education practitioners,
2. consolidating and analyzing their ideas to establish findings, and
3. testing those findings with field educators.

Perhaps an outline is the best way to see an overview of how this multi-step process played out.

### *Phase 1*

1. Listening through interviews and surveys. At this stage the researcher visited seven programs, interviewed almost forty field educators by phone or in person, and collected survey results from twenty three programs.
2. Establishing findings. The researcher analyzed the surveys and then wrote a report on the findings. The data that was collected through interviews and surveys was coded and then sorted into key categories. Then the researcher wrote an initial report on the findings.
3. Testing findings by distributing the report and gathering participants to critique the findings. Four regional gatherings were held, at which field educators responded to the researcher's report, gave new information, and shed light on the relative importance of various educational practices and approaches.

### *Phase 2*

1. Listening through additional interviews and survey. Tape recordings from the initial meetings, interviews and surveys were selectively transcribed. Some follow-up surveys and interviews were conducted in order to verify and clarify problematic findings from the initial report.
2. Establishing findings. The researcher analyzed the transcriptions from the regional gatherings, and compared participant responses to the initial conjectures. The researcher corrected problematic presentations of data, and changed the name in use for one of the categories identified in phase 1.
3. Testing findings. The researcher held an additional gathering of field educators, at which the usefulness of the lexicon and the pedagogical categories was tested.

### *Phase 3*

1. Listening. The researcher held a final regional gathering, at which field educators employed the theoretical language and categories developed at earlier stages of this study. These were employed by field educators in relation to their own research interests about TFE.
2. Establishing findings. The researcher wrote an address to be delivered to a biennial gathering of field educators. At this stage the researcher worked closely with two other key researchers within TFE, who critiqued the content and process for communicating the central findings for this research project.
3. Testing findings. The researcher presented the results of the study during a keynote address at the biennial gathering of field educators. Subsequent to

that presentation, the researcher met with a group of fifty field educators who provided further observations and critique to this final version of the report.

### Summary of How the Three Phases Built the Study Results

Each phase of the study included listening, establishing findings, and then confirming or correcting those findings in conversation with participants in the study. Data collection and analysis of data alternated with participatory discussion and critique. The listening process provided data for initial descriptions of field education. The participants responded critically to these reports, and as they responded they also helped identify new research directions for the next stages. The recursive cycle of developing findings and confirming these with participants culminated with a presentation to the biennial gathering of field educators. However, even this climactic event did not terminate the ongoing learning process. Immediately following the presentation to field educators, a smaller group met with the researcher to discuss and respond to that presentation. The study's methodology therefore can be described as a continuing progression from data collection to interpretation and reporting, and then to participant critique and response, to which the researcher responds by continuing to refine data and build better interpretations.

The next section presents summaries of the ways two major methodologies were employed at each phase of the study. These two methodologies are grounded research and participatory action research. The chapter subsequently presents the way the research was conducted chronologically, showing how each phase of the study built a comprehensive description of TFE, based in analysis of the data as informed by research participants.

## Methodology

### Method One: Grounded Research

In this section I show why grounded research is an appropriate method for this study. I do so by giving the reader a brief overview of grounded theoretical development and then making connections to the particular field of study involved in this report. In general, grounded research is the most suitable way to explore a field or phenomenon from an inductive stance, and is particularly useful when one is developing theory out of current practice, rather than testing the validity of existing theory.

#### *The definition and background of grounded theory*

According to Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, “a grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents.”<sup>1</sup> Since grounded theory is drawn from research, it stands in direct contrast to theory that is applied to data. The researcher, in developing grounded theory, does not set about with a goal of proving theory. Instead, the researcher has an objective of wrestling with data to find meaningful relationships and categories. Then the researcher gradually develops grounded theory that expresses meanings embedded within those relationships.

Grounded theory can be distinguished from other theory by its organic relationship to the data. As Strauss and Corbin explain, “(grounded theory) is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon.”<sup>2</sup> Strauss and Corbin then denote the type of relationship grounded theory has to data: “data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other.”<sup>3</sup> Grounded theory emerges from and interprets data, but does not draw upon data to prove pre-existing theory.

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss pioneered grounded theory in their 1967 text, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*.<sup>4</sup> Glaser and Strauss each taught the approach and then wrote reflectively about it. In his 1978 follow-up text on grounded theory, Glaser summarizes the strengths of grounded theory: “[it] is transcending...in the sense that it conceptualizes the data, thus raising the level of thought about it to a higher level with a few concepts that indicate many heretofore seemingly separate incidences.”<sup>5</sup> He points to the central strength of grounded theory: “[it] systematically relate[s] categories into theory that both renders the data and works with it.”<sup>6</sup>

In summary, grounded theory has been in use as one strategy for the theoretical development of qualitative data since the mid 1960s. Recently there has been a resurgence of interest in the ways grounded theory enable the researcher to focus on the experiences and perceptions of participants.<sup>7</sup> Grounded theory is useful in building relationships between categories and in expressing meaningful connections between data that can be coded into groups. Grounded theory supports research into participant experiences in a way that builds transcendent meanings and interpretations of those experiences.<sup>8</sup>

#### *The basic techniques of grounded theory*

The fundamental strength of grounded theory is that it forces the researcher to listen carefully to the data before developing organizing principles or theories about the data. The techniques of grounded research enable the researcher to consider each aspect of the data as potentially related to any other aspect of the data. The relationships

between data are built carefully and gradually, in such a way that the researcher is surfacing relationships that were already embedded in the data.

Grounded theory builds essential relationships between the data and theory through what is called a conceptual code.<sup>9</sup> The researcher interacts with the data to develop this conceptual code by asking three basic questions:

“The most general question is ‘What is this data a study of?’”<sup>10</sup>

The next vital question to continually ask when studying field notes is “what category does this incident indicate?”<sup>11</sup>

“Lastly the analyst asks continually: ‘What is actually happening in the data? What accounts for the basic problem and process?’”<sup>12</sup>

These three questions were the driving questions at the heart of all of my efforts to make sense of the data I gathered about field education. I continually asked “what is this data a study of?” For example, when field educators told me that they sent students out on interviews with placements so that they could learn how to discern where they should and should not do ministry, I asked, “what does this approach signify about the pedagogical stance in this field education program?” I was not, for example, trying to evaluate whether or not that was a good way to place students. I was trying to notice which other programs also placed students this way, and how they talked about other aspects of their programs. I looked for patterns. Did, for example, programs that sent students out to find their own placements also state that the supervisory relationship was the key location for teaching leadership?

The technique grounded theorists use is to collect data, and then analyze that data through a coding process. They use codes to assign incidences to as many categories as

possible. The incident in the example just given is: placements are made by sending students out to interview and discern their own choice for an internship. The coding would be: this is an approach to placement. Another code would be: how often is this correlated with an attending statement that the supervisory relationship is the key location for learning in field education? In this coding process, new categories emerge, into which new incidences may fit. In the example given, the emerging category is, supervisors are the identified as the primary teachers for field education. But then, another type of placement approach may also be correlated with that statement that supervisors are the key teachers. So the grounded research gives the researcher a way to notice where there are similarities and differences within the same category.

The most highly recommended process is called open coding, where every single incident or sentence is assigned a code and put into every possible category. Another, less recommended approach, is called overview coding, in which a more cursory read of the data yields an “impressionistic cluster of categories.”<sup>13</sup>

#### *The rationale for a grounded theory approach*

As I previously explained this study uses a combination of two approaches, both grounded theory and participatory action research (PAR), which will be explained in more detail below. This combination actually creates a hybrid research approach. Several aspects of PAR provided useful correctives to my use of a grounded theory approach. Before I explain the role of PAR however, I will detail how I used techniques from grounded research.

From grounded research techniques I used the three key questions repeatedly to clarify the focus of the study, as well as to identify discrete categories of phenomenon.

As I reviewed data, I used the overview coding approach to develop pedagogical categories. Although I analyzed the material in considerably more detail than might be described as cursory or overview neither did I actually perform a line-by-line coding of every sentence of the data. Given the hundreds of hours of transcriptions of regional gatherings and interviews it would have been impossible to have assigned codes to every sentence. More importantly, such an approach was unlikely to contribute significantly greater clarity in organizing the particular kind of data in this study. However, the input of participants in critiquing the categories established a corrective in that the participants were able to show me what I missed, or where I might have correlated data incorrectly.

Grounded theory is ideal for this study because of the study's goal to describe what happens within TFE, and to develop meaningful categories of pedagogical approaches. My aim is to depict the ways various parts of TFE relate to other parts. I want to show the theory that lies within existing relationships and educational approaches to forming leaders. My goal is to illuminate how and why TFE uses certain educational methods. An ultimate purpose would be for the grounded theory of educational work within TFE to resonate with participants' experiences. This study proves useful if it helps field educators to transcend their own perspectives to be able to see how other participants also experience TFE.

Grounded theory is necessarily variable and changing, which suits the reality that TFE is adaptable. Grounded theory provides a flexible format to represent a changeable substantive area. Glaser points to this strength in grounded theory: "a theory must be readily modifiable, based on ever-emerging notions from more data."<sup>14</sup>

The usefulness of the theory is important since one of the hopes of the study is to promote learning within the community of field educators. Glaser explains: “grounded theories have ‘grab’ and they are interesting. People remember them; they use them...a theory must have fit and relevance, and it must work.”<sup>15</sup> This study explored the usefulness of its theory even as the theory was under development. Participants critiqued the construction of the theory and the terms used, and changes were made in response to those observations. Even as participants made these observations, they entered into a new type of dialog with each other about the substance of their work. In other words the theory, even in its initial incomplete forms, still enabled field educators to enter into meaningful, substantive dialog with each other about their work.

In closing, the study’s results might be characterized as grounded theory, yet the highly descriptive nature of the results might suggest the use of language of interpretation rather than theory. The goals were qualitative, not quantitative. The purpose here was not to discover numerical relationships embedded in the data, nor to use quantitative measures to determine the significance of various aspects of a theory. Instead, the goal has been to engage in deeply inductive listening processes that enable field educators to better understand basic educational components and methods of TFE. However, there is a theoretical nature to the results because of the way the pedagogical models enable understandings of relationships between various aspects of TFE programs, and to explore the significance of emphasizing one approach over another. This aspect of the study’s theoretical work, the building of tools to signify and enhance understandings of relationships between elements stands in the tradition of grounded theory.

### Method Two: Participatory Action Research

My research design relies heavily on incorporating participants into the research. This means that in some ways my approach is a modified participatory action research model. At each stage of the study, I included the participants in the conversation about the meaning of the research results. For example, after I had conducted interviews and administered the surveys that are detailed below, I wrote up an initial summary of my results. In that summary, I categorized types of field education programs. Then I set up a series of conversations with the participants. We gathered several times and reviewed my research. Participants critiqued, corrected and made substantial contributions to the research results and process during these conversations. The participants thus played a crucial role in the collection, interpretations, and evaluation of this study's findings.

There are ways however, that my inclusion of participants in the research differs significantly from the standard use of PAR methods. After summarizing the general meaning of PAR, I will detail the ways in which this study deviated from the norm for this type of research.

#### *The definition and background of participatory action research*

According to Paul McNicoll, PAR is a methodology that “incorporates subjects in the research and indexes results to transforming the lives of those involved.”<sup>16</sup> Further, according to McNicoll, “it is what happens when researchers are both part of the population to be researched and beneficiaries of the findings...[a]cademic and professional researchers serve not only as experts but as co-learners who share their research skills and also recognize and benefit from the skills and knowledge of the other group members.”<sup>17</sup> Since I was not just a researcher into TFE but also a director of field

education myself, I was both a part of the population to be researched and also received immediate benefits from my own findings.

Kalay Mordock and Marianne Krasny point out that PAR “attempts to remove the distinction between the researchers and subjects by engaging scientists and community members in the process of inquiry.”<sup>18</sup> They also point out that PAR makes it possible to “build coalitions among researchers, community members, (and others) which unite them in collaborative action.” My approach to the series of conversations with the participants was to work as a co-learner. I did take substantial initiative in planning, researching, preparing, and leading the discussions. However, the flow of learning was definitely multi-directional.

*The basic techniques of participatory action research*

The inclusion of participants into the research, the approach by the researcher of being a co-learner, and the way the results belonged not just to the researcher but also to the participants suggest the methods used here are similar to PAR methods. The methods used in this study fall outside several parameters of PAR in several respects.

First, PAR is firmly linked to liberating persons in difficult socio-economic situations. The word action stands at the center of the phrase participatory action research in a way that symbolizes the centrality of action that addresses inequities and injustices. The main point of PAR is that those who are usually disenfranchised receive new support and resources so that they can transform their circumstances and even their lives.

*The rationale for participatory action research*

This research project did not address objectives related to social justice and transformation. The primary goal was to collect information and describe TFE accurately. However, those who were included in the research expressed deep appreciation for being part of the study. Further, a number of participants articulated that the gatherings of field educators had enabled them to engage in conversations about their work situations in ways that helped them to address longstanding problems in new ways.

I want to be careful about using the term PAR to describe this research since it did not have a goal of enabling the disenfranchised to address social injustice. The term clearly stands for research associated with purposes of social justice. However, the inclusion of participants in this project did carry a few similarities with PAR projects. The values of listening to participants, learning with them, and encouraging their voices to correct and critique the study are this project shares with PAR.

Since I was myself a field educator, I had a very close relationship with my subjects.<sup>19</sup> I interacted with the subjects of my study by meeting with them to hear their responses to an initial report of the research. These meetings provided opportunities that gave me an intuitive as well as an intellectual sense about the ways various parts of field education programs supported, built upon, or detracted from one another. However, it is important to note the limitations of such a close relationship between researcher and subject.

My closeness with the subjects of the study may have influenced the results in ways that are difficult to identify. The relationship of the subjects to the researcher and each other certainly lent validity to the study, but also may have limited the candor of

participants in sharing possibly negative reactions to the materials the researcher presented. Furthermore, since a grant administered by the research team funded the travel and lodgings for the subjects, some may have felt less willing to critique my research presentations. In spite of these complicating factors, the methods employed were the best available to build a culture of inquiry into the work of TFE.

In qualitative research that involves a researcher discussing the material with the subjects of that research, “subjectivity and interaction are assumed.”<sup>20</sup> Qualitative research acknowledges the value that comes from such interaction, while also recognizing the need to take account for the effects of interaction between subject and researcher.

### Summary of Research Methods

The research methods to be detailed below are inductive, qualitative, and can best be described as grounded theoretical techniques. The researcher relied on the continual input and influence of the participants, and so the research also contains several aspects of PAR. In the course of the study, utilizing surveys, interviews, site visits and convenings of field educators, I have studied TFE programs at thirty five schools. This includes at least forty one individual interviews. The next section shows the details of how the study built a compendium of essential elements of TFE, its pedagogical models, and its learning community of field educators.

## The Phases of the Study

### Phase One

The initial focus of this phase was on collecting and refining preliminary findings about TFE. I used several methods to collect data, including interviews, site visits, and the collection of crucial materials, such as field education handbooks. This phase also included distributing a survey to twenty three programs. These approaches enabled me to develop a wide knowledge base about the actual practices within TFE. I collected specific data about how each aspect of field education was carried out in various contexts. This enabled me to eventually develop categories of approaches to TFE. Phase one also included four gatherings of field educators, during which the initial results of the surveys and interviews were scrutinized by participants.

#### *Gathering data through interviews*

During phase one I initially conducted interviews during site visits, but then I expanded this through telephone interviews, and then by meeting field educators at previously scheduled conferences and other events.<sup>21</sup> The time period over which these interviews took place was five years, beginning in 1999, even before I was first employed as a field education director.

I began these interviews long before I completed my coursework for the doctorate. In fact, these interviews informed my decision to pursue a degree. At this point I was trying to figure out what I could study about field education. I wanted to know what work had already been done in researching field education. I was particularly interested in finding out pedagogical strategies for developing leaders. I was interested in

learning how field educators tied their classroom work and their individual work with students and supervisors to their goals for developing ministerial leaders.

Since I had very limited knowledge about field education at that point, these initial interviews followed a form that Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey call “unstructured interviewing.”<sup>22</sup> In these initial interviews, I was open ended, although I used similar questions at the beginning of each interview. I did not attempt to restrict respondents’ answers to stay in limited categories. Instead, I wanted, through these interviews, to gain an initial broad sense about what educational perspectives informed the approaches field educators took to structuring their programs.

The earliest, unstructured interviews took place during 1999-2001. I visited the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, where I met with Lynn Rhodes. I also visited Wesley Seminary in Washington D.C., where I interviewed Sue Zabel, Director of Field Education, Lewis Parks, and the Academic Dean, Bruce Birch.<sup>23</sup> During this time I also went to Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan, New York, where I interviewed Kathy Talvacchia and Ian Straker.<sup>24</sup> Additionally, I interviewed Belva Brown Jordan, the field educator from Lancaster Seminary.<sup>25</sup> A final site visit that completed this stage of seminary visits was my trip to Andover Newton Theological Seminary in Newton, Massachusetts, where I interviewed Julieanne Hallman. An important addition to my visit at Andover Newton was my opportunity to attend a class session teaching theological reflection to D.Min. students.<sup>26</sup> I later interviewed the teacher of that seminar as well. The interviews with these field educators were taped and selectively transcribed.

At this initial stage of the data collection process, I was interested in gathering general information about how field educators ran their programs. Sample questions

from these interviews include: “How did you enter field education as a profession?” I also asked a series of questions about how the educators conceived of religious leaders, and how they tied specific parts of their programs into the development of such leaders. I was curious about whether they had specific strategies in the educational process that they felt would help students develop particular competencies for ministry. For example, I wondered if they saw the need to develop leaders with capacity for strategic planning. If so, then, I wondered, did they have educational exercises designed to build the skills of strategic planning? I did not ask questions in that type of detail, but I did ask them to envision the leaders they hoped would graduate from their programs, and then asked them to talk about how what they did helped form such leaders. I will briefly go over the essentials of what I learned in these initial interviews below.

I was surprised to see that most field educators were engaged by these questions, but had not usually considered them before. They were well-versed in their ideas of what types of leaders they hoped would emerge from their schools, but what they had not usually previously discussed was how specifically the educational experiences in their classrooms might develop such leaders. They did have a general sense about these issues, however. For example, they might say they wanted leaders who could handle conflicts effectively. Then they might say that their work in field education to help students become more self-aware was an important step toward being able to engage conflict usefully. Sometimes I would then ask, but is self-awareness sufficient for knowing how to engage conflict for transformation? At that point they would usually say that it was an important, fundamental aspect of this competency. They also might point to the fact that field education is just one part of preparing for ministry, and students

would be developing these complex competencies through many different educational experiences.

I ascertained that most field educators were not referencing research into field education that had compared various approaches and contexts. They were well-versed in their own context, and clear about the needs of their setting and the ways they were addressing those concerns. However, they rarely articulated educational or other theories to justify their approaches. It appeared that their decisions were based on their own usually extensive ministry experience, and their intuitions about forming leaders. Some, like Sue Zabel at Wesley Theological Seminary, had studied leadership extensively at the graduate level. However, I was able to see that field educators interested in the theories of leadership formation had completed their studies in related disciplines, such as organizational behavior. There was no comparable scholarly field focusing specifically on the contextual education of ministerial leaders. This usually meant that the field educator was striving to make connections between theories in related disciplines and the various dictates and realities of field education. The field educator usually had little literature or research to which he or she could refer that specifically treated the formation of leaders through TFE.

These initial interviews also enabled me to ascertain whether other researchers had documented field education materials. I discovered at this stage that no one had collected field education manuals and related materials into a single archive. I did learn that there were a few field educators who were trying to look at a large number of manuals, and to develop what might be an excellent “master manual.”<sup>27</sup> However at the time I was conducting these interviews, there were no recent publications examining the

theory of field education, nor were there recent publications of research-based studies of field education. The field educators whom I interviewed were deeply reflective about their own programs and institutions, but rarely in reference to other programs or to research.

The discovery that there was neither an archive of materials, nor any documentation of common practices within TFE led me to establish the first and most important goal for this study. This was to establish a compendium of basics in field education. I realized that it would be difficult to do any other type of research until someone developed a body of data that describes field education's theoretical underpinnings and actual practices. Otherwise, researchers had no fundamental data to serve as a basic reference. Researchers could not make a statement, for example, like "most field educators employ a discussion-based pedagogy because they believe this is the best way to inculcate their central value, theological reflection." The information on practices such as discussion-based pedagogy was anecdotal. No one could be certain, for example, how many programs had seminars that discussed case studies, in contrast with how many seminars employed different pedagogies, such as presenting ministry information didactically.

*Engaging participants in the research through a conference*

In addition to these initial site visits and interviews, I held one meeting of field educators in which we examined a central pedagogy of field education: case study teaching.<sup>28</sup> Six field educators wrote case studies, and these were circulated for advance study by all of the participants.<sup>29</sup> Upon gathering for our meeting, we discussed how we

each taught cases in our field education programs. Several field educators took turns teaching a model class using their own format for case teaching.

This first meeting was an effort to examine a key pedagogical approach to field education. In my earlier interviews, I heard consistent references to using cases. However, I had not yet been able to identify a common purpose in the use of cases, or whether there was an established pedagogical approach to teaching cases. I had heard a variety of purposes for using cases, including developing self-awareness, teaching theological reflection, and enabling students to see their gifts and weaknesses for ministry. I wanted to get leading field educators together to demonstrate the ways they used cases, and see if I could identify common resources, theories and pedagogical approaches they were using.

In advance of the meeting I provided the field educators with some articles on educational theory, including Jack Mezirow's work on transformational learning.<sup>30</sup> I had assumed that his work would have been an influence already within field education, but discovered that all but one of the participants in that gathering were unfamiliar with his writing. This was a possible indication, I realized, that field education was not engaging in dialog with current educational theorists about the very issues that mattered most to them.

This meeting in which field educators presented their case study approaches to each other initiated a model for future meetings of participants in the study, as will become apparent below. This conference established the value of gathering field educators for learning experiences. It was evident from the gathering that field educators were interested in writing and then critiquing each others' work, but had not been able to

have many of these types of experiences. The group also engaged in discussions about the value of publishing materials for wider distribution, such as to Deans and other theological educators. The value of this meeting therefore was that it pointed to ways I might be able to engage field educators in the more detailed stages of the study that would follow.

*Administering and analyzing a survey*

The initial interviews indicated that a major contribution to the arena of research into field education would be the development of data on what field educators were doing, and their reasons for it. This moved me into the next part of phase one, which was to conduct a survey among twenty three field education programs.

The survey had eight major sections that surveyed the basic aspects of TFE. These sections were: Institutional Data, Structure of the Theological Field Education Department, Program Design, Structure of the Reflective Seminar, The Field Education Manual or Handbook, Placement in Ministry Settings, Relationship of Director of TFE to the Rest of the Theological Faculty, and Background of Director of Field Education.<sup>31</sup> Each section contained a series of questions, such as how the field educator had become a field educator, how much credit was issued for field education, or what were the gaps between existing practice and what the manual or handbook prescribed.

The invitation to participate in the survey initially was mailed to over thirty seminaries.<sup>32</sup> These were selected from the top fifty (in size) ATS schools, according to their listing of seminaries by M.Div. FTE.<sup>33</sup> Of these, only a portion responded. Then I expanded the invitations based on other criteria than just size. At this point I asked the existing experts in the field, who were field educators that had been elected to the

steering committee of the Association for Theological Field Education (ATFE), whom I should contact. This led me to add a group of outstanding and articulate field educators into the mix of respondents to the survey.

The participants in the study therefore are diverse. Five of the ten largest theological schools participated in the survey.<sup>34</sup> Twelve of the study participants have an FTE over 400, another ten have an FTE between 200 and 400, and twelve study participants have an FTE between 90 and 170.<sup>35</sup> The largest number of denominational schools participating was United Methodist and Presbyterian (USA).<sup>36</sup> However, there also were seven interdenominational schools, of which about half might be identified as evangelical.<sup>37</sup> The study is also geographically diverse, with nine from the west coast, seven from the northeast, eight from the Midwest, six from the South, one from Canada, and four from the East coast. The study could be critiqued for the small number of Roman Catholic schools (three) and the relatively large number of United Methodist institutions.<sup>38</sup>

The survey enabled me to compile data comparing how schools carried out various parts of their programs. For example, I compiled data on the number of hours each school required their students to be involved in field work. I also collected lists of books the field educators used in their teaching. I collected the titles for field educators and their faculty and tenure track status.<sup>39</sup> Some of this material is summarized in appendices. At this stage, it is important to simply note that I needed to collect a relatively wide range of data in order to develop a sense of which data should become the focus of further study and interpretation.

### *Identifying frequently found elements of field education*

The surveys helped me to know a great deal about field education. However, my real goal was to clarify the fundamental contours of field education. By analyzing the results of the surveys and interviews, I identified the following elements that seemed to exist in nearly every field education program:

- The Field Education Director
- The Reflective Seminar
- The Supervising Mentor
- The Relationship of the TFE program to the rest of the Theological School Curriculum
- The Field Education Manual or Handbook

These basic elements of field education were the topics field educators returned to repetitively to describe their work, their goals, and their concerns.<sup>40</sup> The survey and interviews thus clarified what would be the focus for the first goal of the project, or which elements would become the focus for writing about field education.

### *Categorizing and reporting the findings*

Following the analysis of the surveys and interviews, I categorized the findings about these essential elements of field education. I wrote a thirty page report summarizing the survey's findings about each of these essentials.<sup>41</sup> In the report, I developed a schema of three basic categories for TFE.<sup>42</sup> These categories were based on my observations of the basic ways programs combine the essential elements of TFE, placing varying emphasis on one element over another. In this initial report, I named

these three categories: formation through emulation, formation through reflection, and formation through integration.

*Developing preliminary categories for approaches to TFE*

The first category, which I initially called formation through emulation, emphasized the learning inherent in the mentoring relationship. The second category, formation through reflection, stressed the value of using classroom seminars to extensively review ministry experience. The final category, formation through integration, emphasized the ways field education experience enhances and completes learning in other courses. These three categories combined with the description of essential elements of field education to form the bulk of the report of my findings in phase one. Later in the study these preliminary categories would be re-named, and the understandings of what they represent within TFE would be expanded.

*Engaging participants in regional conversations*

During this part of phase one, I convened three gatherings of field educators that took place in the fall of 2003.<sup>43</sup> I invited everyone who had participated in the survey and, of those, eighteen were able to attend a meeting.<sup>44</sup> The meetings were held in hotels in Boston, Massachusetts, Ontario, California, and Indianapolis, Indiana.<sup>45</sup> In advance of the meetings, I mailed my thirty page report on my research to each participant.<sup>46</sup> The participants read the report and arrived at the meeting prepared to discuss and critique the findings and interpretations I had given them.<sup>47</sup> Each of these gatherings followed a format that began with informal dinner discussion, after which we held a full day of meetings and discussions, and then we concluded with another informal dinner discussion and social time.

These meetings allowed a new kind of interaction for field educators. They enabled field educators to get to know each other, to share concerns, and to dialog about how they approach their common tasks. Most field educators work in isolation, without a close colleague on the faculty or staff. They are fortunate if they are able to attend the biennial gatherings of field educators. The infrequency of these gatherings for the professional association has, however, forestalled the building of a vibrant learning community. Field educators have found it difficult to get to know each other if they are from different denominations or geographical regions. For many who attended these gatherings, it was the first time they had been able to spend this much time sharing with other field educators. Randy Nelson, longtime director of field education at Luther Seminary, observed another reason that discussions had not been happening between field educators from different programs: “There hasn’t been much common writing up to now because the diversity has been [stronger] than the commonality. That’s partly what you’re trying to argue for, is we’re always going to be diverse, but is there a way to talk about that diversity, in ways that we can all understand.”<sup>48</sup>

In order to lay a foundation for the building of a learning community, the meetings began with a dinner social occasion. The more formal meetings on the following day also began with introductions. That was because although I had built relationships with most of those in attendance through many conversations and meetings, most of them did not know each other. This enabled the participants to know something more about each other before we began the work of reflecting on the similarities and differences between programs.

The major work of these sessions was for the participants to critique the report of my findings which they had read prior to the gathering. There were several responses that participants consistently made. First, they were very appreciative to be able to read something about the work they were doing that helped them to gain perspective on the varying ways that field educators go about meeting the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) requirements, the needs and missions of their institutions and denominations, and the central task of preparing religious leaders.<sup>49</sup>

Another consistent response was skepticism about the name for my first category, which I was calling “formation through emulation.” There was almost universal disdain for the term “emulation.” My intent in using the term was to signify the way that supervisors are living models for how to engage in ministry. Students find this living model to be a crucial reference point for their own formation process. I clearly stated that I did not intend for the term to signify that students would become carbon copies of their mentors, nor that they were being forced into a pre-set mold. Nevertheless, participants universally found the term problematic.

I learned several things from the strenuous objections raised at all three meetings to my use of the term emulation. First, it did not matter how much I clarified my intent in using the term, what I meant to imply and what I did not intend. What mattered was the common usage of the term. Common usage of the term emulation implies formation based on a set model, a fixed ideal, rather than formation in deep respect for individual variations in gifts and style. Therefore my use of the term was violating a central if yet unarticulated tenet of field education, which was to maintain a high degree of respect for individual developmental processes, and an attendant reluctance to dictate outcomes.

Furthermore, it implied a formation process that was devoid of integrative work on the part of the learner.

Another important learning occurred during the final meeting, in Indianapolis. By that time it had become clear to me that I would need to substitute another word for the first model. Emulation clearly was unsuitable. I was candid with the participants there, and opened the discussion up for their insights. They began to reflect on the ways that these models for field education were going to be used in the future. They came up with the metaphor of a cartographer, who asks the people living in a territory what they call a particular river or path or lake. They advised me that I also should use the language that field educators in this program were using, not some overarching term that no one was using. Craig Nesson, field educator and academic dean at Wartburg seminary put it succinctly: “Does any school use the term ‘emulation?’ I mean that’s my problem with the term, it’s not familiar to the field, and it seems like [the] reverse [of the] argument for integration.”<sup>50</sup> This became a guiding principle for me, that I should use the actual names in use, and explain why I might select one word over another when multiple words were in use. This led me to discard the term emulation in favor of the term mentoring, which is widely used within field education.

An additional observation by the participants was distrust of my finding that the average length of service of field educators was eight or nine years. Participants repeatedly observed that their own experience led them to believe that the average length of service by field educators was much lower. This widely-held perception was so strong the participants could not accept the validity of my findings. In response, after the completion of the regional meetings, I queried an additional thirty schools on just this

question, length of service.<sup>51</sup> The findings remained essentially the same: that field educators averaged eight or nine years of service. When I presented these results at a later meeting (described below in phase two), field educators were equally unwilling to shift their perception from the idea that field educators had a very short length of service.<sup>52</sup>

My interpretation of this finding is that it is significant for what it shows about the culture of TFE. The culture of the professionals who work in field education is primarily an oral one, not based in written or published reports and research-based findings. When a relatively easy-to-confirm finding, of the average length of service, contradicted a core piece of knowledge, the culture was not prepared to alter its perceptions. This would violate the rules of an oral-based culture, in which perceptions are confirmed through conversation and discussion rather than through surveys and compilation of numbers. The beleaguered sense of field educators, that they are on the margins of theological education and generally serve in positions not afforded the usual protections such as tenure, depended in part on a fact that I simply could not verify with the evidence in my survey. I am not seeking here to focus on the importance of the average length of service of field educators, but instead on the way the learning community evolved in the face of a new way of reflecting and using materials.

The participants also were skeptical that there were actually three categories of approaches to TFE. Some found my descriptions of the third category, reflection through integration, to be more wishful than actual. They doubted that schools were truly functioning in a third, distinct way. Instead, they argued, schools either emphasized the mentoring aspect of their program, or the seminar discussion element of TFE. They

questioned the validity of a school that truly placed field education in a role of supplying vital information and material for the functioning of the rest of the curriculum. I will discuss this matter further in my report on phase three, at which point I gained greater clarity on the validity of this third category.

In sum, my experience of discussing the report and its model for three categories of TFE with participants during the regional gatherings confirmed the usefulness of the grounded theory. The pedagogical models for TFE were sufficiently engaging that participants invested themselves in identifying with one or another model, and were thereby enabled to hear the differences between their own approach and that of other participants. This helped to meet another hope of this study, to foster a new level of learning within the community of field educators.<sup>53</sup>

At the regional gathering in Indianapolis, we concluded our session together by engaging in theological reflection on what we had just done together. This was a special time, since field educators teach theological reflection to groups of students but rarely have the opportunity to engage with other field educators in reflecting theologically on their own work. One quote from that discussion shows the depth of insight that this discussion generated. Mark Fowler, field educator at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, observed that the relationship between TFE and the rest of the theological school curriculum mirrors that of the relationship between the church and the seminary. In each case, the issue of who protects and nurtures faith is at stake. Fowler asked:

Where is the deposit of the faith located? There is a sense that the deposit of the true faith ... is actually in the academic life as protected by the guilds, and therefore must be transmitted somehow to the church, with great fear and trembling [because] they're somehow going to mess it up. And I think that's where I get with the integration model. It's almost like;

you can apply this, but don't bring anything back, for God's sake. The other is that it's in the messiness of the other two [categories] that it comes out that it can't be pure, and we know that all of the categories that we will talk about, the church will go along anyway, whether we categorize them or not, it's going to go along. But where does it happen? And who's trying to hold onto what?<sup>54</sup>

Here Fowler takes his reflection to a deeper level by acknowledging the natural resistance to making the dialogical nature of learning between church and seminary, or TFE and the rest of the curriculum, truly mutual. He frames the question as an issue of power and authority, relating these issues to the question of who holds the deposit of faith.

Phase one thus established a baseline of information that could allow field educators to engage in dialog about their discipline. This phase also began the process of engaging participants in critique of the data collection and interpretation of the materials. Their conversations and comments contributed to the database of information about field education. Thus the documentation of programs was supplemented by listening to participants clarifying and interpreting the information, which enhanced its accuracy. The way these participants engaged with the materials also met a goal of building a learning community for field educators. Thus the purpose of the gatherings of field educators was twofold: one was to contribute to the accuracy of gathering and interpreting materials about field education. The other was to engage participants in meaningful dialog with each other in a way that built different dynamics from the past experiences in field education of field educators talking past each other.

## Phase Two

### *Summary of phase two*

Phase two focused on solidifying the pedagogical models that were tentatively developed and tested in phase one. This called for employing the same recursive method of listening to participants, solidifying models, and checking results with participants that was used in phase one. Furthermore, phase two enabled me to establish which elements were at the core of TFE, and how the various pieces of TFE related to each other. Phase two, finally, gave another opportunity for participants to engage in two convenings that built upon earlier gatherings to raise the level of learning within the community of field educators.

During phase two, I thought carefully about the observations participants made during the phase one regional gatherings. Through reflecting on the quotes from those gatherings, I was able to solidify the pedagogical models for TFE. The process for this phase therefore began with listening to the new quotes and reflections of participants. It next moved to another regional gathering of participants. This meeting engaged participants in reflection on the evaluative tools they were using in a way that enabled them to hear significant details of how a number of programs worked. The final ingredient of this phase was a culminating gathering of participants in which they each presented papers and critiqued each others' work. This final meeting raised the level at which field educators interacted with each other around writing and research, thus addressing the study's effort to build a learning community within TFE.<sup>55</sup>

*Analyzing and codifying interview and survey results*

The first accomplishment of phase two was to solidify the models by analyzing the input from participants collected in phase one. Contradictions between information received at one regional gathering and another were laid side by side for consideration. For example, at one gathering the third model, reflecting through integration, was raised as a highly valuable ideal for field education. At a later gathering, Jeffrey Mahan of Iliff Theological Seminary questioned the model with the piercing insight that the key evidence supporting the existence of the third model would be solid information that the context was actually informing the rest of curriculum. Otherwise, he observed, the model was just another example of the application of theory to practice, and not a truly circular model of learning.

I re-worked the pedagogical models and developed more extensive descriptions of the basic elements of TFE during phase two. For example, in response to considerable confusion over the meaning of my use of “integration” during the regional gatherings, I realized that I needed to focus what I did and did not intend to signify in my use of the term for one of the three models. Similarly, the mighty objections that had been made to my use of the word emulation forced me to think carefully about what programs did and did not intend to have happen when their students worked closely with their supervisor.

*Engaging participants in a conference on practice within TFE*

The next step in this phase was to gather participants in a convening that encouraged them to listen and learn significantly from each other. In particular, I chose to focus reflection on a particular practice within field education, the use of competencies for evaluation. Twelve participants from those who had attended earlier gatherings or

had returned surveys participated at the March, 2004 meeting in Newport Beach, California.<sup>56</sup> Participants brought examples of their own school's work with competencies for field education or the M.Div. program.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, participants read an article by David Nygren et al. about research into which competencies are most important to effective leadership in ministry.<sup>58</sup> This meeting contributed to the third goal, the development of a learning community within TFE.<sup>59</sup>

*Creating a new base of information about TFE*

These combined meetings, a total of six regional gatherings of participants, essentially created a new database about TFE. This database that resulted from the transcripts and recordings of conversations at these six meetings supplemented the materials I had gathered through interviews and the survey. During phase two I reviewed all of this new data that had been created. I especially focused on the field educators' reflections on their work. These additional reflections solidified the value of the three pedagogical models I had initially developed as a schema for TFE. However, I shifted my names for these categories and some of the descriptions of what each category contained.

It was at this point that I began to realize that as useful as the categories (reflecting through mentoring, reflecting through practica, reflecting through integration) might be, they did not represent mutually exclusive ways of functioning. Instead, at this point it became clear that nearly every program contains three basic elements: mentoring, reflective seminars or practica, and integration with the rest of the curriculum. Instead of being mutually exclusive categories of functioning, they pointed instead to the ways programs differed in the degree of emphasis on one of these elements over the other two.

The categories were useful partly due to the ways they enabled programs to gain perspective on what they valued most highly as they selected where to place the highest level of educational energy and focus. I realized it was most useful to remain flexible and fluid in applying the categories, since they were not objective formulations of entities, but were instead paradigms that enabled discussion and reflection.

### *Renaming the categories*

In phase two, I shifted the names for the three pedagogical models. They became: Reflecting Theologically through Mentoring, Reflecting Theologically through Practica, and Reflecting Theologically through Curriculum Integration. The underlying premise was that most field education programs seek to inculcate the habit of theological reflection, but they do so by emphasizing one element of field education over the other two. In some cases the primary emphasis is on the relationship with a supervising mentor. In other programs, the main focus is on the way theological reflection is taught through campus-based seminars. And in other cases, the primary location for learning theological reflection is in the ways the curriculum achieves integrative learning, utilizing the contextualized learning achieved through field education.

### *Engaging participants in research through a writing conference*

Phase two concluded with a final meeting of field educators in Nashville, Tennessee during October, 2004.<sup>60</sup> A small group was invited there to present papers reflecting their own research interests.<sup>61</sup> This group included some who had participated in previous meetings, but also included a field education student, as well as three participants who had not been part of previous meetings. The meeting showed that field educators were doing their own research into field education, and were able to write and

critique each other's work in ways that fostered the continued growth of the learning community.

### Phase Three

#### *Finalizing and interpreting the data*

Phase three gave opportunity to finalize the results and interpretations of data. At this phase, I continued to reflect with two leading field educators, Dudley Rose, Chairperson of ATFE, and Robert T. O'Gorman, Chair of Publications for ATFE and past Chairperson of ATFE. They continued to encourage me to develop the map for TFE in ways that the professional association would find useful. As we reflected together on the Nashville gathering, for example, we agreed that the leading researchers within field education were growing in their readiness to prepare published materials for a wider audience.

#### *Refining the research through response by participants to the presentation of results*

Phase three concluded with my making a presentation of the results of the study to the biennial international gathering of field educators in Toronto, Canada on January 22, 2005. This presentation was one of the keynotes for the gathering. It represented a new moment in field education gatherings, since the previous pattern was to invite non-field educators to address the group on issues of mutual interest. By inviting four other field educators and me to present their work, the organization was recognizing that it was entering a new phase, when experts from within could bring insights worthy of the group's collective focus.

After the conclusion of my presentation, there was a brief question and answer period. The basic tenor of their remarks was that they found my presentation of

pedagogical models for TFE to be a helpful map, with which they could locate themselves and also see themselves relative to other programs. Another overwhelming sentiment was that they were relieved to realize that it was appropriate to make choices about where to focus educational energies, as they had been feeling a burden of trying to do all three of the pedagogical models equally well in their programs. Most field educators were well aware they were not able to accomplish all of these pedagogical models, but they had not recognized that it could be healthy to focus and choose between models. The issue I tried to raise was that they needed to look at the institution's mission in making such choices.

*Responding to the research through a workshop*

Following my presentation, I had a workshop with about fifty field educators attending. After a brief presentation on the models, I invited them to divide into three groups, based on the presentation of the three major pedagogical models. To my delight and amazement, the fifty participants divided almost exactly evenly, with one third joining the Reflecting Theologically through Mentoring group, another third attending the Reflecting Theologically through Practica group, and another third becoming part of the Reflecting Theologically through Curriculum Integration group.

This equal division between the three models is not a scientific verification that these models actually exist. It does, however, point to the usefulness of the models in enabling a large group of field educators to reflect on their work. I circulated between these three groups, which were led by guest facilitators. In each group, I heard participants remarking on the similarities and differences between the ways their school worked within this model, and the insights they heard from other participants. In other

words, within each model there seemed to be real diversity, but still the models gave enough coherence that participants could recognize some similarities between their approaches and those of another participant.

### Conclusion

This study set up a lengthy process of working with field educators. It involved listening to field educators as they reflected on their work. It involved collecting data in order to establish a base of information about the essential elements of field education. It called for a process that engaged field educators in building a learning community, in which they reflected together on the basic principles of their own work. Finally, the project built a rudimentary map of TFE, showing its diverse terrain and the diversity as well as the coherence of approaches to educating religious leaders through contextualized education.

## Chapter 3

### Overview of Theological Field Education

#### Introduction

##### A Religious Leader's Most Important Capacity Is to Reflect

The capacity to reflect lies at the heart of religious leadership. Such a proposition might not be immediately clear to the reader. One might, instead, assume that excellent leaders are those who are able to perform the basic skills for ministry, such as preaching and teaching, with a high level of quality. It would therefore be understandable for the reader to assume that a study of TFE would present the facts about how students learn to do the basic tasks of ministry.<sup>1</sup> However, this study instead examines how programs based in experiential learning enable students to know themselves and develop their arts of leadership in the best possible ways.

##### *Donald Schön's influence within TFE*

In my conversations with field educators, I frequently heard them quote a particular author when they explained the core purposes of their work. Their frequent references were to the work of Donald Schön, who examines the ways professionals learn to reflect as a crucial element of developing competency. For example, the Chairperson of the ATFE steering committee set the agenda for the Toronto biennial gathering as the following: “we gather...to converse with one another about how we bring the materials of praxis, reflection, and analysis together in field education in order to help students become ministers who are reflective practitioners.”<sup>2</sup>

It would be difficult to describe field education without making reference to Schön's conception of reflective practice. This chapter therefore begins by summarizing his insights, to which many field educators refer when explaining the central tasks of field education. Field education's multiple goals, including the development of skills can be understood in terms developed by Schön. The goal for field education of developing leaders who are spiritual and faithful, have a sense of their vocation, are skilled in the tasks of ministry, can reflect theologically on experience, are integrated in terms of head and heart, and relate well with their colleagues, are all developed under the rubric of reflective capacity.<sup>3</sup>

This focus on developing reflective capacity relates to Donald Schön's insights about what comprises excellence in professional practice. Schön demonstrated that professional practice includes deploying skills, but in ways that often go beyond solving technical problems. Professionals function less like technocrats than like artists because they must continually work creatively to design new approaches to what Ronald Heifetz names adaptive challenges.<sup>4</sup> TFE uses reflection on experiences to teach students skills in a way that helps them to become artistic, reflective practitioners.<sup>5</sup> Thus TFE engages students in developing skills in a way that builds their overall professionalism, based in a wider and deeper sense of perspective on their choices and options in relation to situations.

Reflective capacity is a term that was extensively developed by Donald Schön as he looked into many different kinds of professional practice, not just ministry. Schön investigated how architects, counselors, and many other professionals develop their ability to function well in the face of circumstances that are not quite like those for which

their formal education prepared them.<sup>6</sup> Schön found that the crucial common characteristic of professionals who function well was this capacity to be reflective in the middle of ambiguous circumstances. He found reflective capacity enables the professional to take their existing knowledge base and employ it in ways that work well in new and challenging situations.

This way of understanding leadership points to the limitations of simply focusing on an existing set of skills for professional formation. Skills are necessary, but insufficient for the professional who will face unpredictable problems. For example, a surgeon must learn how to cut into human tissue and sew new connections that will enable the body to function. To some extent this calls for skills. However, every surgeon can tell of bodies that do not look like any textbook, and injuries or abnormalities that present like none they have previously encountered. In these moments, skills of cutting and suturing are just the beginning of what is needed for professional practice. Surgeons must learn how to approach ambiguous problems with a sense of artistry that emerges from reflecting on all of the circumstances and options for solutions.

*Reflective work as a means of interpreting situations*

The professional builds new ways to interpret situations through reflecting on practice.<sup>7</sup> Another way of talking about interpreting situations is to use Schön's terminology, which was the epistemology of practice. Donald Schön used this term to signify the way that professionals develop knowledge as they reflect on practice.<sup>8</sup> TFE develops knowledge in a way that goes beyond the mere acquisition of skills.<sup>9</sup> Its most significant contribution to student learning lies in the way TFE provides opportunities to develop an epistemology of practice through reflecting on their experiences as religious

leaders.<sup>10</sup> Reflecting on experience teaches students how to integrate faith and action in ways that provide a basis for visionary leadership. The reflective habit then enables students to act faithfully as self-aware leaders.<sup>11</sup>

### Ministerial Leaders Face Challenging Conditions

Reflective capacities have become increasingly valuable to ministerial leaders because of the difficult conditions they face.<sup>12</sup> Ministry students will serve in a world remarkable for its shifting definitions of professionalism. Recent increases in tensions over diverse religious perspectives call for leaders who can see issues from many perspectives. The need for multiple strategies for developing religious leaders corresponds to the increasing complexities of leadership in contemporary society. Religious leaders must attain a broad mastery of skills, including preaching, teaching, counseling, and administering. Yet the most crucial aspect of forming leaders involves teaching them to employ those skills with compassionate attentiveness to the tenets of faith and the needs of a troubled world.

### Theological Field Education Employs Three Educational Components to Teach Reflection on Experience

Most TFE programs teach reflective leadership using some combination of three components.<sup>13</sup> The first component is mentoring. Experienced practitioners mentor students, usually on an individual basis, in ministry settings. The second component is the reflective practicum, or seminar, in which students often use case-study type or verbatim type approaches to reflect back on experience. The third component is the integrative dynamic of field education as it feeds experience and contact with ministry settings throughout the curriculum. Theological schools count on TFE programs to

engage students in reflection on experience in ways that coordinate themes running throughout the M.Div. curriculum. These three components: mentoring, practica, and curriculum integration all build reflective capacities that strengthen religious leaders.<sup>14</sup>

The first section of the dissertation focuses on these essential components which make up this study's compendium of TFE. The primary goal of the study is to document these components.

### The Importance of Understanding What Actually Happens in TFE Programs

Before I can present the research on these components of field education, it is necessary to familiarize the ordinary reader with TFE. The reader needs an overall sense of what is happening in TFE programs in order to follow the detailed distinctions between how programs combine and customize the components of TFE. For the common reader, who has not attained an M.Div., or who does not teach in a theological school, it is difficult to know what field education is. Most readers would probably assume field education to be akin to when a student teacher serves in a classroom under the close guidance of a mentor teacher. Or they might believe it is something like a medical residency, in which a student begins to perform surgery and make diagnoses under the close tutelage of a senior doctor. However, the reader would have no way to actually know what field education programs do and do not include, and the differences between programs. It would therefore be difficult for the reader to immediately benefit from detailed descriptions of specific aspects of TFE, without an overview that gives insight into the basic contours of field education. This chapter therefore gives a general description of TFE.

After delineating the purposes of TFE, the chapter presents a fictional case of an M.Div. student's passage through a field education program at a fictional seminary. Following the case, the chapter provides a quick look at ways some programs differ significantly from the picture provided by the case. Thus, by the end of the chapter, the reader becomes familiar with what generally happens in field education, as well as some of the common deviations from that standard. This then will ready the reader for the rest of the first section of the dissertation, in which extensive information is provided with regard to particular aspects of field education.

### Theological Field Education's Purposes

#### Theological Field Education's Main Purpose Is the Preparation of Religious Leaders

There is no singular purpose that defines TFE. Neither the ATS (Association of Theological Schools) nor ATFE (the Association for Theological Field Education) gives an overarching definition or mission statement for field education. Among field educators there is, in fact, more unanimity over what is *not* an overarching goal.

Most field educators would concur that getting practical experience is not their program's sole aim. But they would point diverse directions to name their goals. Some would point to integration. Others would refer to the development of a habit of theological reflection. Still others would focus on TFE as a process of mentoring for vocational discernment. Most would not believe there was a necessary trade-off between each of these goals. Some might name integration as a goal, while also endorsing the absolute importance of mentoring. One has to look beyond statements of purpose to begin to discern a real difference between approaches at one institution vs. another. But

there are differences indeed, based on very different assumptions about learning, formation, and leadership.

One might be tempted to assume that saying the focus of TFE is on integration or reflection is a matter of semantics. When a statement of purpose is related to the way a program is structured, however, it becomes clear that the use of differing terms often does point to something more significant than word use. This report later explores the ways that it makes all the difference how a school frames its TFE program's ways of teaching reflection.

For now, it is worth noting that current practice in TFE does not have clear, agreed-upon categories for approaches to its work. So one field educator could say he structures his program around integration, and mean something quite distinct from another program, also identified with integration. TFE is ill served by using terms with such broad definitions that they lose meaning. To say all TFE is about integration implies a singular value. Yet within TFE, between programs at different institutions, there are deeply differing conceptions of what TFE should be, and is. In this report I summarize TFE's goals and purposes as preparing religious leaders.

#### Association for Theological Schools Guidelines

One way of understanding TFE's goals and purposes is to ask, why do theological schools incorporate TFE programs at all? A quick answer would point to the requirements of their main accrediting agency, the Association of Theological Schools. In six small paragraphs, the ATS gives an intentionally broad, non-specific guideline for schools to help students gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership. The clearest directive for field education asks schools to "provide theological reflection on and

education for the practice of ministry. These activities should cultivate the capacity for leadership in both ecclesial and public contexts.”<sup>15</sup> The ATS asks its schools to “provide for courses in the areas of ministry practice and for educational experiences within supervised ministry settings.” Further, the ATS asks “the program (to) ensure a constructive relationship among courses dealing primarily with the practice of ministry and courses dealing primarily with other subjects.” The ATS also specifies that students must have supervised experiences in ministry of “sufficient duration and intensity to provide opportunity to gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership within both the congregation and the broader public context, and to reflect on interrelated theological cultural, and experiential learning.”

In a later section of the requirements for the M.Div., the ATS gives some clear parameters for how schools must develop and evaluate those who would supervise these ministry experiences for students in M.Div. programs. Many of the ways TFE programs work to train supervisors seem to be partly in response to the wording of these requirements. However, simply looking at these requirements is inadequate to describe how TFE works. Schools have developed an impressive diversity of options for meeting ATS requirements for field education.

#### How Theological Field Education Program Materials Describe Program Purposes

The ATS requirements therefore, point just generally to the purposes and mandates for TFE. A more detailed picture emerges from looking into the ways seminaries themselves describe the purpose of their TFE programs. Luther Seminary, for example, describes its contextual leadership program as “an opportunity to explore what it means to do theology in a specific context-urban, urban fringe, suburban, town and

country, rural, specialized.”<sup>16</sup> Luther Seminary’s focus is on learning a way of doing theology rather than on getting experience.<sup>17</sup> No one would deny, however, that it would require many pages to fully describe what learning to do theology in context actually entails.

While Luther Seminary focuses on doing theology in context, Perkins School of Theology focuses on helping students form vocationally. The rubric of vocational discernment serves as a key feature of Perkins’ program.

Other schools describe TFE as an integrative process. Boston University calls supervised field education “an essential integrative experience that lies at the heart of the Master of Divinity degree program at Boston University School of Theology.”<sup>18</sup> Boston’s focus on integration mirrors a near consensus among field educators on one important goal of TFE: integration. As will be seen later in the dissertation, this central purpose of integration relates in interesting ways to central concerns within all of theological education. In spite of TFE’s consensus that integration is a major goal, it remains unclear exactly how and when integration occurs. Integration is difficult to engender, to measure, even to define.

### Summary of Purposes

Field education engages M.Div. students in ministry contexts. There, with supervision, students learn how to do the work of ministry. They gain perspective on their own gifts and callings. They bring together their academic and theoretical work with practical concerns. They hone their understandings of how they will lead congregations during their future ministries. Field education has many purposes which all coalesce around a purpose of forming leaders.

### Description of Theological Field Education

This next section presents a brief case of a field education student, which is intended to inform the reader about how field education generally works for students in M.Div. programs. The case is fictional, describing Josephine's field education program at Mainline Theological School. After presenting the case, I then show how programs differ from her program in five basic areas. At the end of the chapter, the reader has basic knowledge about what happens within TFE. The intent of this description is to be brief but comprehensive enough so that the reader can place the concerns and issues addressed in the study into a context of current TFE programs. Following this chapter, the next section of the dissertation presents the study's findings about each basic element of TFE in detail.

#### Field Education Case: Josephine

##### *Josephine's experience prior to entering seminary*

Josephine, like many contemporary theology students, has been active in a profession other than ministry for the fifteen years prior to her coming to school. As an active member of her congregation during that time, she has led worship, become a certified lay preacher, and has attended the Walk to Emmaus.<sup>19</sup> She has been encouraged by her pastor to pursue theological studies, and is meeting regularly with that pastor to complete the first steps of the ordination process.<sup>20</sup> Her prior activity in the life of her own congregation led her to believe that she could do well as a pastor. She decides, therefore, to further explore a possible vocation in ministry by attending theological school.

*Josephine enters the process of preparing to lead*

Josephine enrolls in medium-sized, denominationally affiliated theological school I will call Mainline Seminary.<sup>21</sup> She will attend school along with students from multiple denominations since local students often cannot move to the theological school affiliated with their own denomination. Its student body includes men and women, young people recently graduated with bachelor's degrees, and mid-life professionals. Mainline does not ordain its graduates, but enables them to complete one crucial component of their preparation for ministry, the M.Div. degree. Most students anticipate serving congregations upon graduation, but a significant minority will enter education, chaplaincy, agency work, and other fields.

*Josephine enters field education*

All field education programs have to find a way to match up students with placements. In Josephine's case, her work on determining what type of internship she will experience begins long before she actually enrolls in the coursework. Even though Josephine does not actually enroll in field education until her second full year of study, she meets with the director of field education during her first semester at Mainline. During this interview, the director asks her what she might be interested in doing upon graduating. Together they discuss Josephine's vocational interests and concerns. The director asks Josephine to identify where she might be interested in working for her field education placement.

Field educators interview students in order to place them in internships that will best fit their needs as well as the needs of the placement. On many campuses these field education interviews may be the primary arena in which students can explore the nature

of their callings to ministry. Field education often provides an avenue for significant vocational discernment on a highly individualized basis.<sup>22</sup> Josephine, for example, might want to discuss what it involves to shift from corporate to non-profit work. She might also want to discuss questions that relate to her age, her marital status, as well as the more traditional aspects of call such as her faith perspectives. Since the field education director needs to know about Josephine's concerns in order to give her the most beneficial learning environment, it is natural that they would have such a conversation. Thus the interview that precedes the field education internship opens doors for Josephine to begin serious vocational discernment.

Field education directors interview students for reasons that go beyond merely matching students with placements. These interviews engage students in vocational discernment. During the initial interview with Josephine, the director asks Josephine to express her hopes for a placement and a supervising pastor with whom she might work. The director asks if Josephine wants to work in a large or small congregation, with a woman or man, in an urban, rural or suburban setting. As Josephine answers these questions she begins to take responsibility for her own learning process. The way students participate in setting up the learning environment for their internships enables students to give concrete shape to their developmental needs. When students begin to articulate the types of experiences they would like to have in their internship setting, they engage in the type of self-directed learning that is a trademark of excellent adult education.<sup>23</sup>

Following the initial interview with the director, Josephine participates in the actual selection of her internship. The director suggests to Josephine that she look

through the listing of possible placements maintained by the field education office. The field education office has carefully selected possible placements and has listed these for students to consider. The field education director believes that this exercise builds crucial skills students will need for making choices in future ministries. Josephine interviews with two possible placements. A few weeks later Bob, one of the pastors at a congregation, calls to offer her a position as their intern during the coming academic year. Josephine is thrilled to think she will actually be serving a congregation as their pastor for the first time in her life.

#### *Josephine and her mentor*

Josephine begins serving as an intern the first semester of her second full year at seminary.<sup>24</sup> She will work closely with the senior pastor of the church. Throughout the year, she will work for ten hours per week in her placement, and she will be expected to fulfill a wide range of ministry responsibilities.<sup>25</sup> Pastor Bob will encourage her to shadow him during the early weeks, so she can get a feel of how he does things, and he can get to know her.<sup>26</sup> She might, for example, sit in the back pew during a wedding rehearsal, or sit in his office while he meets with a family planning a funeral. Josephine will preach four to six times per year, teach an adult bible study class for four weeks, lead worship at least eight times per year, and engage in regular pastoral counseling and care. Josephine will also meet bi-weekly with Bob, during which they will reflect on the work she is doing in the church.<sup>27</sup>

#### *The connections between Josephine's field education and the rest of her studies*

Field education is just one part of Josephine's preparation for ministry. Even while she is enrolled in field education, she also is taking three or four other courses in

her M.Div. program. This combination of hands-on ministry and highly academic study means she may face crunches of having papers due at the same time as crises occur in the church. The concurrent field education and academic courses often relate to each other, but they also sometimes present absolute conflicts. She may feel an overwhelming sense of confusion over loyalties between academy and church, between personal life and public service, between student dependency and responsible professionalism. These confusions can provide rich learning opportunities since most ministerial positions carry similarly overwhelming levels of responsibility and divided loyalties.

The cross pollination between field education and other courses points to another key role of field education. Field education provides the raw material necessary for many other courses to fulfill their central educative purposes. For example, at Mainline the homiletics professor requires students to preach during a regular worship service, and they must videotape the sermon. Additionally, students must collect sermon evaluations in a standard format from congregants. Then students are required to write reports of their experiences for the homiletics class. The homiletics professor structures classroom discussions based on students' experiences in congregations. Josephine finds that the experiences she has in field education enrich and help clarify the issues that arise in most of her other coursework. So field education is not isolated learning; it is learning that integrates with other components of the M.Div. curriculum.

#### *Josephine's opportunities for reflection on field education*

Josephine finds a number of opportunities for regular reflection during her field education year. Mainline's field education program requires that Josephine write weekly reports to the director of field education. These reports include structured reflections on

her experiences in her placement. Josephine also meets every other week with her supervisor and a group of lay people from the congregation. These meetings with the pastor, lay people, and the work with the field educator provide significant opportunities for reflection on experience. Josephine also attends four seminars per semester that give basic information about ministry responsibilities such as performing weddings, funerals, and legal obligations of pastors and churches. These opportunities for reflection allow Josephine to step away from the complex responsibilities she is carrying and gain perspective on her growth toward leadership.

*Josephine's engagements in evaluation*

Field education also provides an opportunity for students to learn about evaluation processes. At the end of her field education year, Josephine will receive a written evaluation from her supervisor that will be read and put on file by her field education director. The written evaluation also provides crucial information to the ordaining committees within her denominations. Josephine also will go through Mainline's middler year review. This consists of a scheduled meeting between Josephine, her academic advisor, her supervisor, the director of field education, and another faculty person. The purpose of the middler year review is to identify any areas of concern that should receive her focused attention during her final year of study. These are just a few examples of how evaluation is embedded in the field education experience in ways that enable students to learn another crucial component of public leadership: how to structure, receive and then build upon evaluative feedback.

### Variations on Josephine's Example Within Theological Field Education

The case presented above, of Josephine's TFE experience at Mainline, gives one example of how a field education program might work. It should be noted, however, that some theological schools would declare this case to be so different from their programs that it does not even give a relevant overview of their programs. The complexity of TFE is such that no single case could hope to be general and yet specific enough to capture the essence of all programs. Instead, a more complete description of TFE will be built by delineating variations on this basic case.

Programs vary mainly by the degree of emphasis they place on the various parts of field education. However, there are many approaches that are only present in some, but not all programs. This section surveys the range of ways elements are included in programs. The basic aspects on which programs differ are: a) full vs. part-time internships, b) ways of structuring the field education seminar, c) the ways to engage laypersons in the training of ministers, d) the roles of supervisors, e) the types of placements (whether or not the fieldwork is exclusively focused on congregational and chaplaincy work), f) the level of staffing for programs, and g) the roles of the field educators. In the next section of this chapter, I will briefly describe each of these basic aspects of programs.

### How Elements Are Included in Programs

#### Full-time Internships vs. Part-Time Concurrent Internships

The first significant variation on Josephine's case would be the fact that some programs require full-time field education internships for all of their students. At

Mainline, students enroll in field education for about one third of their time in the degree program.<sup>28</sup> Their field education work entails about a fourth or a fifth of their coursework during that time period. In other words, field education is a significant, but relatively small fraction of the time they spend in their degree studies. Few would argue that field education represents a minor influence on their studies from this mathematical calculation.<sup>29</sup> However, students who enroll part-time in field education do find they are balancing significantly competing demands between their academic requirements and their internships.

A minority of programs requires instead that students take a year to work full-time in a ministry setting.<sup>30</sup> Theological schools with this requirement place students across the country in selected congregations and other ministry settings. Because students in full-time internships move away from the theological school to complete their internships, their field education is removed geographically from the direct interpretive influence of the seminary.<sup>31</sup> Students who leave seminary to do full-time internships would not experience Josephine's immediate cross-pollination between courses and her concurrent field education. A student would not, for example, easily be able to consult an Old Testament professor the same week as the student teaches a bible study on Genesis in the internship setting. These programs emphasize the ways students bring a depth of perspective and purpose to their final year of study as a result of the time away from seminary during which they are fully immersed in the challenges of ministerial leadership.<sup>32</sup>

Another variation on the full-time vs. part-time issue is the option to complete fieldwork during a summer or other inter-term period. Schools sometimes send students

to do full-time ministry work during the three-month summer break. Then the students return to seminary with materials they have compiled during that full-time work. They may then bring the materials into field education seminars that meet concurrently with other courses. This arrangement allows students to experience full-time ministry on a much shorter-term time schedule than a full year internship.

This way of configuring reflection after the completion of an internship, however, places a significant temporal divide between experience and reflection on experience. The details of experiences may be less clearly accessible for reflection several months after an incident occurs. The major difficulty in this divide between experience and reflection, however, relates to the way it makes it even more difficult to tie reflection to changing future behaviors. Students in this model do not have the opportunity to bring the insights arising from reflection back into the same ministry setting to test those insights.

#### Variations in Reflective Practica

The reflective seminar, or practicum, is another variation on Josephine's case. Instead of meeting weekly with peers for a practicum, at Mainline the students reflect by sending regular written reports to the director. They meet occasionally as a group for sessions that are didactic in character. Most field education programs include another reflective component, the weekly field education seminar or practicum. The seminar usually meets on campus. Adjunct faculty persons, often practitioners, usually lead the seminars. In a minority of programs, full-time faculty persons teach these seminars. The seminars usually include some mix of informal sharing and didactic teaching. Often, the

seminars focus on cases written and analyzed by the students themselves. The stated goal of many of these seminars is to teach the discipline of reflection.

### The Educational Relationship Between the Intern and Laypersons

Most programs offer some variation of Mainline's requirement that students meet regularly with laypersons. Some programs require the student to meet regularly with a committee of lay people without their supervisor present at the meetings. Other programs require the student to meet with the laypersons at the same time as they meet with their supervisors. The programs that include such requirements of meeting with laypersons generally point to a goal of learning from laity as well as ordained leaders. They may point to a value on partnership with laity in developing leadership. In some cases, the theological perspective of the school does not support the need for clergy to meet regularly with laypersons for theological reflection. In such schools, there is no equivalent requirement to this component.<sup>33</sup>

### How Supervisors Teach Students

Nearly every program features a supervisor who works closely with the student. The role of the supervisor is highly variable. In some cases the supervisor is seen as a key instructor in the arts of theological reflection. In other cases the supervisor is seen as an expert practitioner who supervises the student's formation of crucial skills for ministry. Usually the supervisor is the senior or solo pastor at the congregation where the student works. However, supervisors are not always ordained clergy persons. A number of programs require that students work in non-congregational placements in addition to congregational settings to complete their field education requirements. So students might serve a congregation for a semester, and then work in a social service agency for the

subsequent semester. In such cases, the supervisor may or may not have received formal theological education.

Programs usually structure a formalized way to train supervisors. In some cases the supervisors must complete a course of study on supervision before they can supervise an intern.<sup>34</sup> In other cases the supervisors receive a day long course on supervision just prior to the beginning of the internship. Some programs instead continue training over the entire period of time of the internship. Most programs have differing levels of requirements for training supervisors depending on how many times they have had a student.

#### Types of Placements

Most programs are preparing students for congregational leadership. Thus most placements center on congregational life. However, a significant minority of programs has additional requirements for students to serve in non-congregational ministry settings. They might require or offer opportunities for students to serve in secular settings such as law firms. They also sometimes make it possible for students to serve in agencies that may or may not be affiliated with denominational or congregational bodies.

#### Level of Staffing and the Roles of Field Educators

A future section of the dissertation focuses specifically on the field educator. The overall staffing of field education departments varies widely between programs. Nearly every program has a full-time director of field education, who is provided with some level of part-time administrative assistance. Some programs with a hundred students have up to five full-time staff for field education, while others with similar numbers have just one full-time staff person.<sup>35</sup> Some programs have less than ten students per year and

have a full-time field educator. This is a matter of some concern since there presently is no avenue to advocate for or even ascertain an appropriate level of staffing.

The previous section gives the reader a sense of what happens in TFE, and some of the variations between programs. Now that the reader has a basic familiarity with TFE, the concluding section summarizes findings on all of the participating programs.

### Conclusion

This concluding section presents a summary of what will follow in the next three chapters. There, I will describe the three major categories of field education programs. In order however, to give the reader an overview of the terrain of TFE, the following chart gives an initial indication of where most programs I have studied are found in terms of these models. The process for identifying which model would be the best to describe actual programs included the following questions:

Does the program have weekly practica? (If practica are infrequent or non-existent, the program was coded for mentoring or integrating).

Does the program describe the supervisory relationship as primary in its literature or in my interviews with the field educator? (If so, program is coded for mentoring category).

Does the program have syllabi related to the practica? (If so, the program is coded for practica.)

Does the program employ facilitators who are trained to lead practica? (If so, the program is coded for practica.)

Have all of the faculty named an integrating theme for the curriculum? (If so, the program is coded for integrating).

Have all of the faculty claimed a commitment to integrative learning and teaching, and placed field education in a key role to accomplish that goal? (If so, the program is coded for integrating).

Do supervisors receive extensive training? (If so, program is coded for mentoring).

Do practica leaders receive extensive supervision and training by the field educator? (If so, program is coded for practica).

Does the field educator teach at least one section of the practica? (If so, program is coded for practica).

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Mentoring Model</b>	<b>Hybrid Mentoring and Practica</b>	<b>Practica Model</b>	<b>Integrating Model</b>	<b>Insufficient Information</b>
Ashland Theological Seminary					x
Boston University School of Theology			x		
Carey Theological College, Regent College	x				
Church Divinity School of the Pacific			x		
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis	x				
Covenant Theological Seminary					x
Denver Seminary				x	
Dominican House of Studies			x		
Duke Divinity School	x				
Fuller Theological Seminary	x				
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary			x		

Golden Gate Baptist					x
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary					x
Harvard University Divinity School				x	
Iliff School of Theology				x	
The Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University Chicago	x				
Luther Seminary	x				
Pacific School of Religion				x	
Perkins School of Theology	x				
Princeton Theological Seminary	x				
San Francisco Theological Seminary	x				
Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry			x		
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary					x
Union Theological Seminary			x		
University of Chicago School of Theology				x	
Wartburg	x				
Wesley Theological Seminary		x			
Western Theological Seminary				x	

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Key Elements of Field Education**

#### Introduction

This chapter defines five fundamentals of field education. These are elements that I found in nearly every program in the project. Although these elements were nearly always present, this survey of how those elements manifested does not necessarily prescribe that these are essential to the functioning of programs. Neither does this presentation evaluate the priority these elements are given within TFE. This presentation describes what I found in nearly every program, but leaves to another study the consideration of whether there should be other ubiquitous elements, or whether or not these elements ought to be so omnipresent.

These basics are: the field educator, the reflective practicum, the field education manual or handbook, the supervisor, and the relationship between field education and the rest of the curriculum. These rudiments make up the compendium that is the primary goal of this project. The chapter develops research-based definitions in three stages. First I provide a general definition for each essential. Then I establish the vocabulary used in relation to the fundamental element. Finally, I identify the range of ways the rudiment is embodied, based on the research. By the conclusion of the chapter, the reader has a clear picture of what makes up field education programs, and the variety of ways theological schools put those elements to use in preparing students for ministry.

### Description of the Field Educator

TFE programs are almost always led by a key administrator or faculty person, who is usually called the director of field education. The job is variously configured by theological schools. This section presents the results of research into who these key persons are, and how they serve their institutions.<sup>1</sup>

### Definition of the Term: Field Educator

Field educators usually are faculty members whose full-time responsibilities include teaching field education seminars, placing students in supervised ministry settings, and training supervisors. These field educators often bring backgrounds of extensive ministry practice, usually as pastors. Although most have a doctorate degree, directors have little specific training for their roles as field educators.

In this section, I refer to the role of the *field educator*. This is actually a rarely used phrase when schools designate a title for the person implementing the field education program. The rarity of the phrase's use in titles might make it an odd choice for the generic reference. However, I use it precisely because it is a recognizable reference to the function, without necessarily evoking any specific configuration for the role. As will be shown below, field educators are given a wide variety of combined responsibilities, but what this study examines is how they perform the central task of being field educators.

### *Two key aspects within the role of field educator*

The term *field educator* signifies two key aspects of the role. On the one hand, the use of the term *field* points to the need for engaging student learning in an arena beyond the traditional limits of the theological school classroom. The second part of the

term signifies that the role is for one who educates in relation to the student's field work. The combination of these two aspects can be traced historically. In the late 1950s, field education was just beginning to establish a sense of how to develop educational purpose in relation to actual ministry experience that takes place during the seminary years. Robert Treese, one of the ATFE pioneers, gives this summary of an early gathering of field educators: "our conversation...centered around the...question of...how to take the essential fact of students employed in ministry for self-support and make it into an experience of learning."<sup>2</sup> This conception of the role of the field educator from the first years in the discipline gives some insight into how the profession began to see its educational imperative.<sup>3</sup> The profession has, since its beginnings, seen the role of the field educator as extending beyond administrative responsibility for placing students into an employment or skills development situation. Instead, the profession has, by using the title *field educator*, emphasized the teaching aspect of the role.

*Diverse titles are used for the field educator*

The term field educator, however, is insufficient to fully define the expectations for the role in many theological schools. This has led to a flowering of titles used for field educators. Only two of the forty two titles provided in my research used the exact phrase *director of field education* by itself. None uses the exact title *field educator*. The fact that many different titles are used for field educators shows the diversity of ways that theological schools identify possible combined roles for persons employed as field educators. (See Appendix C for a complete list of the forty two titles collected in this research study.)

Titles often contain key phrases referencing the institution's way of configuring TFE. So, for example, the phrase *supervised ministry*, a clear reference to the ATS requirements, is used in eight of the forty two titles.<sup>4</sup> Note that instead of emphasizing the educator aspect of the role, the term *Director of Supervised Ministry* emphasizes that the student is serving in a situation where they are doing ministry that is supervised. This shifts the focus away from how the field educator makes the situation educational, onto how the placement is configured so that the ministry is supervised, and presumably therefore educative.

Another of the terms used increasingly in titles is *context*, which points beyond the student's engagement in supervised ministry. It indicates way that the student can learn from knowing how to study their ministry setting as well as simply by performing supervised ministry tasks. In an article on the role of the field educator in theological education, Robert T. O'Gorman, Kathleen Talvacchia, and W. Michael Smith point to the use of *context* as stemming from the way that "field education...emphasizes the contextual nature of *all ministry*, including the ministries of exegeting and interpreting, theologizing and teaching."<sup>5</sup> Three of the forty two titles use the phrase context or contextual.

The most frequently used phrase in the titles for the role is *director*. Only five of the forty two titles in this study did not use the term. Use of the term director points to the administrative function associated with the role. O'Gorman, and his co-authors make the point that it is misleading, however, to distinguish administration from teaching: "When they (field educators) evaluate and select placement sites, when they engage students in reflection on their vocation...when they coach students through placement

interview processes, when they recruit and train supervisors...they (field educators) are teaching and facilitating learning.”<sup>6</sup> It would therefore be misleading to conclude that the more frequent use of *director* than *educator* in any way signifies a shift toward administration and away from education.

An example of the way field educators combine educational responsibilities with administrative ones is found at Carey Theological College. Barbara Mutch, the Charles Bentall Chair of Pastoral Studies in joint appointment to Carey Theological and Regent Colleges, combines many roles at the two institutions she serves.<sup>7</sup> Each semester, she teaches over a hundred students in the reflective seminar portion of field education. She also places the students into their internships. She has no assistant for the substantial administrative work of placing so many students each year. Mutch simultaneously carries responsibilities in another discipline, directing the D. Min. program.

The example of Mutch’s broad responsibilities points to a norm in the way many field educators fill several roles at once within an institution. As one field educator put it, the office of supervised ministry sometimes becomes the miscellaneous office.<sup>8</sup>

#### Variations on How the Role of Field Educator Is Configured

Field educators serve their institutions in a wide variety of ways. This section will explore that range by looking at field educators’ roles in a) serving as faculty members, b) teaching courses, c) supervising placement processes, and d) training and supporting supervisors. In order to build a more complete picture of who field educators are, a final section covers the educational backgrounds of field educators. These areas encompass the heart of the job description for most field educators.

*Field educators serve as faculty in the theological school*

Most field educators serve as members of the faculty. Of the 19 for whom the information was available, 17 were on their institution's faculty, and three were not. Of the 17 on faculty, nine were tenured or tenure track, six were not tenure track, and one was not answered. This means that almost half of the field educators in this study are in tenure-track positions. Some have a hybrid appointment that takes into account the joint educational and administrative responsibilities of their position.<sup>9</sup> Commonly, directors have multi-year renewable contracts. Those who serve as faculty members carry ordinary faculty committee responsibilities and most have a full vote.<sup>10</sup>

*Field educators teach courses*

Field educators usually, but not always, teach the reflective practica that are associated with field education. For the fourteen schools for which this information was available, in eight field educators teach the seminar, and in six the field educators did not.<sup>11</sup> Frequently these other teachers are adjunct, part-time faculty persons who are full-time area pastors. Field educators usually meet regularly with these adjunct faculty persons. For example, at Garrett-Evangelical, Mark Fowler meets monthly with these teachers, and then also schedules one-on-one meetings with the teachers yearly. At the Pacific School of Religion, Lynn Rhodes meets every three weeks with these teachers. The field educator, in such circumstances, is a lead teacher who supervises and supports these other adjunct faculty in their teaching responsibilities. Much more detail about these reflective seminars will be given in the section below devoted to this important element of field education.

At schools where the full-time yearlong internship is the norm, field educators do not usually teach a reflective seminar associated with field education. In these schools, such as Luther Seminary, Wartburg Theological Seminary, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, the field educator carries a relatively heavy burden of visiting students in their placements, or coordinating visits that will be made by others. It is not necessarily the case, however, that the field education directors in these schools do not teach as well as administer field education. Craig Nesson, of Wartburg Theological Seminary, for example, teaches courses on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Ethics in Lutheran Perspective.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Randy Nelson, of Luther Seminary, carries significant responsibility for sharing the course load with other faculty.

Many field educators at schools with part-time, concurrent field education also teach not only within field education but in another, related but distinct discipline as well. Jeffrey Mahan, of Iliff School of Theology, combines a commitment to field education with a scholarly interest in media and culture. He teaches in both subjects and his title reflects an appointment in both areas.<sup>13</sup> Lisa Withrow of The Methodist School in Ohio teaches leadership in addition to field education courses.<sup>14</sup>

*Field educators supervise placement processes*

Field educators place students in their internships. Many interview all of the field education students individually in preparation for either approving placements, or determining where students will serve in their internships. Occasionally, the task of interviewing students is shared between the director and another staff person. Most programs regard the interview as an important part of the student's learning process. In the course of an interview, students gain a new sense of direction in their ministerial

calling. The director also uses the interview as an opportunity to assess the strengths, weaknesses and self-awareness of the students.

The actual process of determining the placement varies among schools. Most schools have the student select their placement from a list of approved sites. This is the process, for example, at Fuller Theological Seminary, the Pacific School of Religion, Harvard Divinity School, the Dominican House of Studies, the Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago, and at Southwestern Baptist.

At the Lutheran schools (Wartburg, Concordia, and Luther), a committee determines the students' internship placements.<sup>15</sup> Since the students usually are required to move quite some distance, and the placement is full-time, the students' lives are deeply affected by placements. Glenn Nielsen of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, explained the weight of his influence (in the committee process) through an anecdote: "At an orientation meeting, the admissions counselor introduced me by saying, 'I'd like to introduce you to Dr. Glenn Nielsen, he has one year of your life in his hands.'"<sup>16</sup>

#### *Field educators train and support supervisors*

In the chapter below that focuses on supervisors, I will have much more to say about the various ways schools train their supervisors. Here it is simply important to recognize that along with the other responsibilities; field educators usually have the major share of responsibility for teaching the supervisory training sessions, when the program offers them. In some institutions this means the field educator teaches a yearlong course (Harvard Divinity School), while in other institutions this means that the field educator coordinates a day long session with supervisors.

*Field educators bring diverse educational backgrounds*

In most cases, the field educator enters academia because someone from within a theological school recognizes them to be a reflective practitioner who brings excellent intellectual and personal gifts to ministry. Often this person has studied in a degree program, or served as a field education supervisor at that institution.<sup>17</sup> The new field educator usually leaves the parish and begins serving as a field educator with no formal educational transition process.

There is rarely any structured or extensive formation process specifically focused on preparing for the particular work of field education. It is generally assumed that an exceptional practitioner can step in to administer a program, teach students, train supervisors, and relate well to the academy. There are no texts for the new field educator to read that describe what field education is, and there are no courses specifically designed to prepare field education directors.

ATFE sponsors new directors' clinics every two years at its gatherings.<sup>18</sup> But these brief sessions do not pretend to serve as a formation path.<sup>19</sup> In one or two hours, experienced field educators pass on words of advice and give out useful materials. On the whole, field educators bring their backgrounds as excellent practitioners and shoehorn themselves into a culture oriented toward study, reflection, rigor, and textual study. The fit is rarely easy or automatic, but it often is energizing and exciting for the director to enter academia.

A majority of the participants in this study had an earned doctorate degree. Of the thirty participants for whom degree information was available, fourteen had D.Min.'s and thirteen had Ph.D.'s. An additional three had M.Div. degrees. (*See appendix F*) Field

educators who held doctorates often had studied relevant disciplines, such as theology or education.

However, there is no doctoral program designed to prepare field educators to serve in theological schools. Andover Newton Theological School specializes in supervision in its D. Min. program, and has graduated several leading field educators.<sup>20</sup> But there is no universally recognized location for preparation for directing a field education program. There is no standard of excellence in preparing to direct a field education program.

There is an irony in this process of formation for directing field education. On the one hand field educators generally are dedicated to teaching students by wedding practical work such as preaching or counseling with academic work such as biblical exegesis and the study of human personality. Yet field educators find that there presently is little scholarly discourse to inform their own work in processes such as placing students and educating supervisors. Given the core dedication to the connections between theory and practice, one might ask: where is the attending emphasis on the theoretical bases for practical work within the formation of field educators?

Another way of highlighting the issue of formation for directors is to ask, who are the mentors for directors, and how do they guide directors? In the interviews for this project, current directors often cited the significance of their predecessor in orienting them to the work they were doing. Many also cited colleagues at other institutions as being particularly gracious in helping them understand their work.<sup>21</sup> The question remains, however, whether a relatively brief orientation by a predecessor or peer is in any

way sufficient, particularly when the world of academics prizes extensive study and mentoring.

Most directors of field education have been congregational pastors who have entered academia in order to help others become reflective practitioners.<sup>22</sup> For example, Dudley Rose, who serves as Director of Field Education and Assistant Dean for Ministerial Studies at Harvard Divinity School, entered academic work with significant experience in both the pastorate and academia.<sup>23</sup> He concurrently pastors the North Prospect United Church of Christ, Cambridge, and directs field education for the divinity school.<sup>24</sup>

Rose's choice to combine academic pursuits with continued pastoral service represents a significant trend among field educators. Like Rose, several other directors choose to continue working full or part-time as pastors while holding major responsibilities within a school of theology.<sup>25</sup>

#### Summary of the Field Educator

Field educators focus on the educational opportunities inherent in the combination of study and ministerial service. They educate through leadership in seminars, through working with students on locating placements, and by training supervisors of students. Their backgrounds usually include doctoral work as well as extensive ministry experience.

## The Field Education Reflective Practicum

### Introduction

Every TFE program is intentional about encouraging reflection on experience. Nearly all do this in a seminar, or practicum.<sup>26</sup> Even the schools with the full-time internship, such as the Lutheran schools, still structure some type of periodic gathering of seminarians for reflection. Although there is near uniformity of educational practice in the employment of the reflective seminar, there are several possible purposes, including, but not limited to, developing habits of theological reflection.<sup>27</sup>

In the following section, I cultivate an understanding of this educational practice by first defining the phenomenon of the reflective seminar. Then I introduce the reader to some of the titles used by programs for seminars. In order to give the reader a picture of how the seminar serves various programs, I briefly describe six purposes that were expressed by field educators in reference to their seminars. Next I detail who generally teaches the seminars. Finally, I describe what happens in these practica, focusing especially on the pedagogical employment of case studies.

### Definition of the Term: Reflective Practicum

In this section, I explore what I interchangeably call the reflective practicum or seminar. The term practicum is infrequently used, but I employ it because of the way it points to the central function of the phenomenon.<sup>28</sup> The seminar enables reflection on practice. The use of the term *seminar* fails to communicate the type of group, which is a gathering of peers who learn through reflection on ministry practice. As will be discussed in more detail below, how the seminars choose to focus that reflection differs between programs. However, the unifying principle is that programs use, in addition to

supervisory relationships and reflections on context in other coursework, field education seminars in which students reflect on their ministerial experiences.

In the survey, I include the following statement: “Most programs require some type of reflective seminar. Sometimes these occur weekly; in other schools the timing is once a quarter. The reflective seminar generally involves a meeting of students with their peers and a facilitator to reflect on practices.” Then I ask a series of questions about how the seminar is configured in each program.<sup>29</sup> At the time I devised the survey, I did not know what to call the seminar, or how generic the reference to a reflective seminar would be. I wondered if field educators would be able to translate my use of the term *reflective seminar* into what happened at their site. This was a case in which the lack of a lexicon for TFE made it difficult to approach the research question. In order to gather data, I needed to reference a phenomenon which did not have a common name nor a clear definition.

#### Vocabulary Used in Relation to the Term: Reflective Practicum

The vocabulary for the reflective seminar includes the following names: the Integration of Theology and Practice (ITP) at Boston University; peer group cluster (Wartburg), M.Div. supervised ministry (Carey Theological College); Meaning Making: Thinking Theologically About Ministry Experience (one of two options at Harvard Divinity School); Practicum (at Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry); and Church Leadership and Field Education (at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary). Virtually every program uses a slightly different name for the seminar. Thus there is no single vocabulary word in use for the reflective seminar.

## Variations on How the Seminar Is Configured

### *Purposes*

There are several purposes for seminars. These include a) instruction in practical skills, b) forming spiritual identity, c) developing vocational identity, d) inculcating habits of theological reflection, e) integrating theory or theology and practice, and f) providing peer support. Many seminars combine these, but some focus specifically on just one or two of these purposes. While there is no uniformity of purpose for the seminar, there is near uniformity of educational practice in the use of reflective seminars of peers who meet regularly.

An example of how a seminar in one program might combine several of these purposes is evident in Kathleen Talvacchia's response on her survey: "We in the course do a mix of case study check in, also topics in the formation of ministry. [So it is a] combination field education seminar, [and an] introduction to ministry course. [For] example, [the...topics might include]: vocation, theological reflection, social analysis, theologies of ministry, professional ethics, various topics in ministry, [and] developing a personal theology of ministry."<sup>30</sup>

Another example of how a program combines purposes for a seminar is Seattle University's approach to focus on a purpose each quarter. So, for example, the first quarter focuses reading and reflection on vocational discernment issues, and the second quarter focuses on family of origin issues.

A key purpose for these seminars is to develop the practical skills required for ministry. For example, Fuller Theological Seminary offers ministry enrichment seminars, including: "I was sick and you visited me," "Mastering money matters for

ministers,” “The church and its civic responsibility.” At Claremont School of Theology, students normally meet in small groups, but on four or five occasions during the year, all of the small groups assemble for a plenary that covers a ministry topic, such as child abuse reporting responsibilities for clergy.

Some schools, such as Bethany Theological Seminary and Garrett-Evangelical, specifically focus on developing the practical skill of congregational study. They often use Nancy Tatom Ammerman, et al., ed., *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* for this purpose.<sup>31</sup> Students may write up a study of their congregation, as well as the community in which their ministry site is located. Then they share this description with their peer group. This gives the student the practical skill of exegeting a community, and also opens a window into each student’s ministry situation in order to build group understanding and trust.

Ilf School of Theology maintains a similar focus on learning to study the community in which one practices ministry. Jeffrey Mahan puts it this way: “Their primary agenda (for the seminar) is reflection on the ministry setting. In the fall each student prepares a social analysis of his/her ministry placement, the winter each student prepares a case for seminar reflection and in the spring students develop a theology of ministry paper which grows out of a second case incident.”<sup>32</sup>

Another purpose for the practicum is the forming of spiritual identity. This may be seen in a variety of ways, including forming denominational loyalty, developing spiritual practices, and developing one’s spiritual perspective on ministry incidents. The spiritual formation aspect of reflective practicum often goes unarticulated, but is an assumed part of what students bring to and draw from the experience.

A central purpose for the reflective practicum is the inculcation of the habit of theological reflection. Don McCrabb, of the Dominican House of Studies, summarizes this purpose for the fourth year deacons enrolled in field education: “We try to ascertain to what degree they have developed the habit of theological reflection. At that point we’re not as concerned about the formalities: writing it up, but trying to get more of a handle of how they’ve woven that into their day-to-day life. Specifically, we’re trying to get a handle on the extent to which they are engaging their community. We want the relationship between contemplation, the people, and the pulpit as opposed to going from prayer in community to pulpit without engaging the ordinary Catholic.”<sup>33</sup>

Wesley Theological Seminary’s response is typical of those who focus on theological reflection: “The required text is Killen and DeBeer’s *Art of Theological Reflection*. Students are required to write four theological reflections the first year. The second year they do a case brief and a theological reflection on it after a colloquy mate teaches it.”<sup>34</sup>

Mark Fowler describes how Garrett-Evangelical inculcates the habit of theological reflection through the seminar as: “One hour per week there is a specific exercise the students do: how do they exegete a situation, how are they developing their own pastoral hermeneutic? One week there may be a ministry event report: doing theological reflection. Or another week it may be a biblical passage out of which they will snap pastoral experiences they have had in the past week or two: how do they relate with each other. The other two hours are check in time, and other kinds of things we do.”<sup>35</sup>

The purpose of providing peer support is nearly universal. Most programs include some type of informal sharing at each meeting of the seminar. This gives students a much-needed opportunity to share and listen to others who are in comparable learning contexts. As Matt Floding, from Western Theological Seminary, puts it: “The seminars provide personal support, a place to reflect collegially on their learning covenants.”<sup>36</sup> Often students need time and space to decompress and get support from their peers. With skillful facilitation, groups can look critically at a student’s interpretation of what is happening, and guide them toward a more accurate and helpful interpretation.

For example, a student might become discouraged that a bible study is poorly attended. Other students might try to comfort the student about the discouraging situation. The practitioner might be able to correct the impression that the student is responsible for how well a bible study is attended. The practitioner might also have a more realistic sense of what it means to have a small number of people attend a bible study.

#### *Case study method*

Most reflective practica utilize case study methods. Of the programs for which information was available, ten used cases and one did not. However, once again this represents a near uniformity of educational practice, and not necessarily purpose. Some use the case method to teach methods of theological reflection while others use cases to identify and expand on personal issues. Often cases are used to develop student self-awareness. Usually, students write up a critical ministry incident and present the case to

the group for further study. This provides an opportunity for being more intentional in reflection on events.

Programs differ in how they approach cases. Some provide structure in how to analyze a case, such as looking at the case from theological, organizational and pastoral points of views. Others ask students to find their own issues within each case. Then these students share with each other how they might wrestle with similar challenges. Another approach is to ask students to respond to preset questions such as: how is God present here?

For example, at Garrett-Evangelical, students write ministry event reports that they then present to and discuss with their supervisors. The directions for how to write the ministry event report include the following: “It is expected that the student is writing these reflections as a spiritual leader who embodies a faith stance and brings the resources of scripture, theology, history, ethics and the practical arts of ministry to this experience...Students should be intentional about integrating their theology and practice and bring their theology to their understanding of what is going on in the event. Students should take the risk of reflecting upon how their experience is shaping, refining and challenging their theology.”<sup>37</sup>

Students usually are given a format for selecting the ministry incident for review, and a way to present and analyze that event. Then there usually is an established way that facilitators lead groups through discussion of the event. In many cases, either the presenting student or some other student then writes a paper about the incident, usually establishing that student’s theology of ministry.

*Who teaches the reflective practicum?*

Several different types of facilitators lead practica. In many cases the field educator facilitates the reflective seminar. A variation on this occurs when adjunct faculty, supervised by the field educator, teach sections of the reflective seminar. In this case, the adjunct faculty persons are officially approved by the faculty of the institution, and are compensated for their work. Sometimes the tenured faculty of the institution share responsibility for facilitating. In such places the Old Testament professor is as likely as is the Homiletics professor to lead a group. In other schools, outside facilitators serve at the request of the field educator and are not compensated. These facilitators usually are local clergy, and they come to the campus to lead groups as a part of their wider service to the church.

Infrequently programs employ doctoral students to teach the seminars. Not all theological schools have doctoral students available to do this task. Even some who would, like Harvard Divinity School, do not utilize doctoral students in this way. At Boston University, just one of the seminar groups is led by a doctoral student. Another variation is to use supervisors to facilitate groups, which is done at Harvard Divinity School.

There are some schools that pay special attention to diversity in the teachers of seminars. At Iliff School of Theology, seminars are all facilitated by two persons, and are gender balanced. At Garrett-Evangelical, Mark Fowler is attempting to recruit not only Elder Senior Pastors but also Deacons on church staffs and persons who lead agencies.<sup>38</sup>

Some programs invest regular faculty with responsibility for teaching these seminars, such as at Iliff School of Theology. At Iliff, faculty rotate responsibility for teaching the year-long seminars associated with field education. They also employ co-leaders who are ministry practitioners. At Iliff School of Theology, each seminar has two leaders, one who is a regular faculty member and one who is a ministry practitioner. At Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, faculty members serve as mentors for spiritual formation groups. At Denver Seminary, faculty persons co-teach seminars with pastors. At Fuller Seminary, some faculty members volunteer to lead seminar groups.

#### Conclusion re: Reflective Practicum

The reflective practicum is almost ubiquitous in field education. Yet it serves diverse purposes, from peer support to the formation of vocational identity. The practicum enables students to integrate various aspects of their learning, often through the pedagogical approach of case study teaching. Field educators play a key role in facilitating these groups, as well as in supervising those who lead the groups.

The previous two sections have treated the field education director and practicum in extensive detail. The remaining sections examine three more essential elements of field education, the handbook, the relationship between field education and the curriculum, and the supervisor. These descriptions of the frequently found elements of TFE provide a baseline that serves as reference points for further study, research and discussion within TFE.

## The Field Education Handbook

### Introduction

Field education handbooks serve a variety of purposes, and contain differing types of materials. They are used in nearly every program. They serve as a crucial communication tool, sometimes providing interpretation of purposes, information on what people should do and when, and giving background for why students or supervisors are asked to perform tasks by field educators.

The manual or handbook has become a necessary ingredient in nearly every field education program. Yet its constancy does not translate into uniformity of shape or purpose. As has been noted in the previous two elements of field education, so also in the case of the handbook there is confusion when field educators gather to compare their manuals. That is because there is lack of clarity of purpose, and then an attending deficit of information about how best to develop a manual for each potential purpose. Field educators pour significant energies into revising manuals, but they have little to turn to by way of reference to guide them in writing and editing manuals for their specific purposes.<sup>39</sup>

These manuals usually are for students as well as supervisors, and are created by each individual program. The manuals are usually in nearly constant revision. A new development is for a majority of the manuals to be available online, which will make it much less cumbersome to compare and contrast manuals between programs.

### How the Study Gathered Information about the Uses and Purposes for Handbooks

There are two major sources of information about handbooks in this study. In the survey, I ask a series of questions about the origins and uses for the handbook.

Furthermore, I request copies of handbooks from each survey participant, and so collected a large number of handbooks in my archive. Finally, I collected information by facilitating discussions with field educators about handbooks during the three regional gatherings.

### The Contents of Handbooks

Handbooks often contain some or all of these sections: introductory information about field education, essential forms and materials, summary of due dates, learning agreement forms and explanations, and definitions of key partners and terms. Examples of materials included for use by students include: weekly report forms for students who report to directors, verbatim forms and directions for creating verbatims, critical incident report forms, as well as directions for writing a critical incident accounts.<sup>40</sup> Supervisors receive covenant agreements and information about how to evaluate students through their manuals. Additionally, handbooks often contain forms such as the work learning contract, and helpful materials such as suggestions for worship services that consecrate students. In addition to these types of information and forms, handbooks sometimes also include articles that will give more content and breadth to the readers' understandings of issues like theological reflection. Finally, handbooks sometimes contain items such as the institution's sexual harassment policy, and other basic items related to the institution's identity and operating principles.

In most cases programs prepare just one handbook for all participants, although a minority of programs prepares separate handbooks focused at particular readers, such as the manual for vicars and the manual for supervision of vicars prepared by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Some programs see the preparation of separate handbooks as a

useful way to focus information on specific users, while others prepare a single handbook for all users in the name of transparency.<sup>41</sup>

Some programs, such as Fuller Seminary, use the handbook mostly as a way to provide needed forms to supervisors and placements, as well as students. Others see the manual as an important aspect of training of supervisors.<sup>42</sup> Some, like Garrett-Evangelical Theological School, combine these purposes. The handbook for the Garrett-Evangelical program explains the purposes behind various aspects of field education in each section.

Thus field education handbooks combine multiple purposes. They serve to inform participants of their roles. They notify participants of legal and contractual responsibilities. The manual instructs participants on the purposes behind various aspects of field education. The handbook may also provide background information and instruction beyond the mere explanation of a role or purpose of an activity. The manual also supplies participants with dates when various forms and evaluative materials are due.<sup>43</sup>

#### The Use and Purposes of Handbooks

Field educators have a range of purposes they have identified for their handbooks. These can be summarized as: a source for required forms and information, a way to train and orient supervisors, and a way to instruct all participants about key aspects of the program.<sup>44</sup> As is true with the other essential elements, there is confusion among field educators because they use the common term, handbook, for resources that are actually serving vastly differing purposes. Thus it is difficult to evaluate a program's handbook, unless one first asks what its purpose is the handbook addressing?

In addition to collecting and analyzing handbooks, I also engaged participants in reflecting about their manuals. During the three regional gatherings I framed our discussion of handbooks in terms of a larger, more universal value of teaching theological reflection. First, I asked them to individually write out their definitions of theological reflection and where it took place in their programs. Next, we looked at their definitions of theological reflection, and then compared where and how theological reflection was taught in their programs. Then, I asked them to scrutinize their own handbooks to see if they contained vital information about what most of them had identified as central to their programs: theological reflection.

In most, but certainly not all cases, theological reflection was not at the heart of the message of the handbooks. In some cases, field educators saw this as perfectly acceptable, since they did not intend the handbook to be a reference on theological reflection or other content of their courses in field education. Instead, in these cases, field educators saw the handbook as simply a way of distributing necessary information about the program, such as forms, dates, evaluation requirements, etc.

Other field educators were, however, surprised to see how little information they had included in their handbooks about a subject that lay at the heart of their expectations: the work of theological reflection. They found this paucity of information about theological reflection to be inconsistent with their intentions, which were to communicate to every participant what theological reflection is, and how one engages in it as a process.<sup>45</sup>

### Gaps between Manuals and Actual Practices

In the survey, I asked participants to identify what gaps existed between the manual's stated policies and procedures and actual practice.<sup>46</sup> In most cases, respondents identified there to be little or no gaps between the manual and actual practices.<sup>47</sup> In some cases, however, respondents freely admitted that the manual was completely out of date and did not reflect much, if anything, of current expectations. In nearly every program, the field educator expressed reluctance to share their manual with me because it was "under revision." I interpreted this to mean that field educators were aware of the gaps between what they wanted to include in their manuals and what they had actually been able to accomplish given the time and financial constraints in their programs. Very frequently field educators expressed concern that the manual they currently had was inadequate, of poor quality, or in some other way not representative of their program.

Taken together, these expressions of concern by field educators points to a central issue in the use and purpose of manuals. First, field educators invest a relatively high amount of their resources of energy and finances to produce manuals. For example, as at Harvard Divinity School, some handbooks are professionally printed and bound, almost like books. Other times, they are printed and distributed by the department. They range in length from ten pages to about a hundred.

Yet there has been no study of how a manual actually effects improvement in field education, either by instructing supervisors or students, or by making goals and content more clear to all participants. It is thus important to recognize that the ubiquity of manuals does not necessarily point to their necessity, effectiveness, or overall value to the educational process.

### The Supervisor

Another crucial element within field education is the supervisor, or mentor. Due to ATS requirements, all programs include some aspect of supervision in field education. However, there are many understandings of how a supervisor best interacts with a student to support his or her growth as a leader. This section explores the ways programs designate a role for, train and select supervisors.

#### The Role of the Supervisor

Some programs train supervisors to teach skills to students, while others view mentors as spiritual guides. Still other programs see it as inappropriate to tell mentors what to do, while some seek to provide extensive guidance and direction to what their mentors do and do not engage in the processes of supervision. The assortment of mentoring within TFE makes sense when we consider the breadth of historical influence and present-day study of what it means to mentor.

Two historic contexts inform our present understandings of mentoring. First, there is the Homeric character of Mentor from *the Odyssey*.<sup>48</sup> There also are exemplar mentors from biblical texts as well as from early Christian history. This heritage brings texture to our appreciation of the value of mentoring. We need not even know the specific histories of mentors for their influence to play upon the ways we configure mentoring programs, and the ways we envision the educational potentials therein. Perhaps even more significantly, the rich history and diversity of present meaning for mentoring complicates the ways programs work with supervisors and help them to understand their particular role as supervisors in field education programs.

Programs vary on the guidelines they set for these weekly sessions between students and supervisors. Most programs in the survey for this project require mentors to meet with their students for one hour per week. Many programs suggest that the mentor should do theological reflection with the student during that time. A few programs, such as Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry, do not encourage supervisors to attempt theological reflection as a focus in these sessions. Such programs suggest that mentors simply respond to the student's concerns, and trust that the ministerial expertise the mentor brings to the situation will be informative and helpful to the student as they seek information and support.

#### Training of Supervisors

Requirements of training for supervisors differ between programs. Andover Newton Theological School requires every supervisor to take a full year of coursework on supervision and theological reflection. Harvard Divinity School's program makes a similar requirement. Most programs offer a more limited type of training, from one-day sessions to multiple meetings. Some offer additional resources such as a chapter from Whitehead's *Method on Ministry* in addition to these training meetings.<sup>49</sup> Perkins School of Theology requires new mentors to complete a three-day training session in May, just prior to the start of internships in June or August. Claremont School of Theology requires supervising mentors to attend at least five sessions per year in any year they have a student. Pacific School of Religion has separate training sessions for those who are new supervisors and those with experience in their program. Both groups meet regularly throughout the academic year.

Program directors report a wide range of compliance with such requirements. Most admit that it is impossible to enforce such requirements universally. Sometimes it is logistically difficult for supervisors to attend, and this reduces their compliance. In addition, some supervisors are hesitant to comply with such a high level of time investment. They agree to participate, but then simply do not attend the training sessions. Most programs state the requirement that supervisors be trained, but admit that not all supervisors within their program actually have completed the full amount of training required.

#### Establishment of Mentoring Relationships

Programs differ in how the mentoring relationships are formed or established. Some programs insist that the director select the supervisor for each student, such as at CST, while most programs invest the student with that responsibility. Many schools set up a time when many placements attend a fair at the theological school when students can interview with several supervisors on the same day. They then can apply to work with the supervisor with whom they think they will work best. Other schools post field education opportunities that have been approved through the field education office. The students then interview at several sites, and then decide where they would like to work.

There are reasons given for each way of establishing the mentoring relationship. Programs that allow students to select their own supervisors from an approved group state they value the student learning that arises in such discernment. Programs that assign students to specific supervisors cite the limited knowledge available to students for making such decisions, and seek to control the process based on concerns for student safety and justice.

### The Relationship between the Field Education Program and the Curriculum

Another aspect of field education that bears scrutiny is the way a program interfaces with the rest of the theological school of which it is a part. Field education is a requirement for the M.Div. degree, as has been previously explained, due to the accreditation requirements for theological schools. This mandates the existence of a program in nearly every accredited school. There is no mandate, however, for just how the program must be staffed, nor how it should fit into the rest of the institution's educational structure. This means that field education can be seen as fitting into the overall framework in a variety of ways.

There are at least three variations of how field education relates to the overall curriculum.<sup>50</sup> In some schools, field education is a course like any other course toward the degree. One way to understand this is to examine the credit issued for field education. In some schools, field education receives three course credits per semester, as would be true for any other course. The actual number of credits given for field education is absolutely inconsistent from school to school. However, the relevant question for this section would be, how does the amount of credit issued for field education compare with the credits issued for other courses?

There are schools that include field education as a requirement for the degree without issuing credit for the course. In these schools, such as Harvard Divinity School, the course functions much like any other course, with required attendance, assigned readings, and expectations of written work.<sup>51</sup> However, its lack of academic credit does make it stand in a different category from other course work.

Another way of configuring the relationship between field education and the rest of the curriculum is for it to be a marginalized add-on to the core requirements for the degree. When the field education program has no on-campus seminar, and the field educator is not on the faculty, it becomes much more difficult for field education to be regarded as having equal standing with other coursework.

A third way for field education to relate with the rest of the curriculum is for the work in field education to be intentionally tied to work in other courses. This may be done through team teaching of courses. It also may occur when other courses, such as homiletics, require students to accomplish assignments through their field education placements. In a few seminaries, such as Lancaster Theological Seminary and the Pacific School of Religion, the field educator or contextual educator works with professors to develop contextualized components to their coursework. Dr. Jordan, of Lancaster Theological Seminary told of how she co-taught a course with a church history professor in which they visited Gettysburg and engaged the students in theological as well as historical reflection on that site.<sup>52</sup>

One important and necessary ingredient to integrating field education with the rest of the curriculum is including the field educator as a member of the faculty. On the survey I asked whether or not the field educator taught courses with other faculty, or served on faculty committees. Although having a field educator attend faculty meetings and serve on committees is no guarantee that integration between field education and the rest of the curriculum will occur, it is hard to imagine how it could happen without this crucial ingredient for faculty conversation.<sup>53</sup>

Another question in the survey provides a different perspective on the place of field education in the curriculum. This is the question of who teaches the reflective seminar. In a number of schools, regular faculty share responsibilities for teaching field education. This choice, to use regular faculty to teach students, organically connects the seminars to other topics in the curriculum through utilizing the same teachers.

### Conclusion

This chapter has looked at five frequently found elements of field education. The field educator is the key teacher and administrator for what happens in the field education program. The practicum is a primary location for teaching reflective practices associated with professional ministry. The handbook represents the program to the many teaching partners affiliated with field education. The supervisor plays an important role in relating to the student during their field education experience. Finally, the place of field education in relation to the rest of the curriculum is something that differs between programs and may characterize the relative importance or centrality of field education to the rest of the M.Div.

## Chapter 5

### Reflecting Through Mentoring

#### Introduction

##### Overview of the Use of Models

The next three chapters compare and contrast three pedagogical models for TFE. These theoretical models build conceptual frameworks for understanding TFE.<sup>1</sup> The central assertion of this theoretical proposition is that it is possible to identify trends, or constellations of educational experience in TFE programs. In other words, not all TFE programs function in the same way, but it is equally true that the number of distinctions between programs is limited, and can be clustered around certain identifying characteristics.

Stephen B. Bevans explains the ways that models can perform the symbolic function of describing more complex realities in his book, *Models of Contextual Theology*. He explains that complementary or descriptive models use “an organizing image that gives a particular emphasis and enables one to notice and interpret certain aspects of experience.”<sup>2</sup> Bevans points to the necessity, due to the complexity of reality, to use a variety of models to represent experience. He explains, “Since models are not pictures of reality ‘out there,’ an exclusive use of one model might distort the very reality one is trying to understand.”<sup>3</sup> He summarizes, “all models, in the inclusive sense, are really inadequate and need to be supplemented by others.”<sup>4</sup> It is important to note the sense in which the models I have constructed are both helpful and limited in their representation of TFE.

The models I develop represent TFE in three broad categories. In reality, no one program is exactly identified with one of these models, and each model will contain programs that fit variously well within its definition. The purpose of the models is not to give exhaustive summaries of all programs, but rather to build a way of representing similarities and differences between programs. Thus the models are not a reality in themselves. They are symbolic representations of something far more varied and complex.

This use of models can be traced back to Avery Dulles, who summarized the use of models in the beginning of his book *Models of Revelation* this way, a model is “a relatively simple, artificially constructed case which is found to be useful and illuminating for dealing with realities that are more complex and differentiated.”<sup>5</sup> The models in this dissertation are also useful in dealing with complex realities. This means that every program will find something in the model that oversimplifies, or leaves out details, or includes aspects not true to their particular situation. The standard by which the models should be judged is not whether or not they fully capture each program, but rather whether they adequately create symbolic representations of how programs differ and are similar with each other.

#### Overview of the Three Models in This Study

The three models are *Reflecting Through Mentoring*, *Reflecting Through Practica*, *Reflecting Through Curriculum Integration*. These three models show differences in the ways programs employ educational energies. That is to say, some programs put more energy into the mentoring aspects of their programs. Other programs, while still including mentors, will focus more on the ways that seminars taught by

practitioners inculcate reflective habits of leadership. Then there are the programs that are part of institutions that have made school-wide commitments to develop an integrated curriculum, with field education playing a major role in accomplishing that integration. These three models cover most of the territory of field education and show the ways programs can achieve similar purposes with excellence, using differing approaches.

### The Reality of Forced Choice in Developing Educational Strategies

Field educators have a number of educational values, which sometimes work in tandem, but also sometimes compete with each other. For example, one educational value focuses on how students learn to lead in ministry settings by being immersed in actual experience. Another educational value emphasizes the way that students learn by taking structured time away from experience in order to gain perspective and insight on what they did and said during actual ministry experiences. A third, and slightly different educational value focuses on the ways that students learn most fully as they bring experience into theoretical learning experiences, and establish a mutual critical critique between the experience and the theories being taught in the classroom.<sup>6</sup>

When field educators decide what students will do in their TFE programs, they must choose where to focus most of the program's energies. It is not possible, nor maybe even preferable, to establish an educational utopia where students can experience every avenue for learning. Instead, field educators have limited time and resources, and so must decide which way to focus the educational experiences of their students.

When field educators make decisions about what types of education experiences to emphasize in their programs, they consider tradeoffs such as experiential vs. conceptual or abstract learning, contextualized learning vs. learning that takes place in

more controlled environments, and skills training vs. teaching reflective or critical thinking.<sup>7</sup> Field educators decide what types of educational experiences to emphasize partly based on their views of students' motivations for learning, meanings of leadership, definitions of church and ministry, and values placed on observing vs. doing. They also make choices based in their institution's values.

One of the messages of this project is that it is not necessarily a sign of failure if a program does not manage to optimize every possible way to educate students for leadership. Instead, it is important for programs to be intentional in choosing the ways they focus educational energies, and to be informed about the tradeoffs inherent in whichever choice they make. Furthermore, this project suggests it might be fruitful to study the ways that different educational choices imply different perspectives on the most important habits of leaders, or the most effective ways to develop leadership strengths. For it is in the act of choosing one method over another that underlying values become clear.

### Overview of the Reflecting Through Mentoring Model

The first model focuses on programs that stress the key relationship between students and their guides, or mentors. The *Reflecting Through Mentoring* model is rooted in the tradition of the elder, experienced professional mentoring someone with little experience, who usually is younger. The elder brings wisdom, and teaches both by example and by deliberate instruction. The mentor encourages the inexperienced person to try new things.<sup>8</sup> The supervisor identifies gifts, challenges weaknesses, and brings an unformed person into a professional level of functioning.

This pedagogical model for TFE focuses on more than just the mentoring relationships between students and pastors, however. This pedagogical model explores what it looks like when the TFE program uses the mentor as the primary teacher, and the ministry placement as the main location for the learning that happens in field education. The model demonstrates how placing a relatively greater amount of energy in this aspect of TFE shapes the overall program. This way of configuring TFE stands in contrast to the other two possibilities, which either emphasize the seminar or the integration between field education and the rest of the curriculum.

This chapter explores the mentoring model in two steps. First, it gives a window into three particular programs that place an emphasis on mentoring. These three brief sketches, or cases, provide concrete examples of real life situations for this model. The last section of the chapter explores how five key pedagogical questions are answered in distinct ways when the emphasis is on mentoring. These five core questions are: what is the primary learning environment, who is the main instructor, who evaluates the student, what is the role of the field education department, and what is the learning relationship between abstract and embodied ideals? Before introducing the programs that emphasize this model, however, first I give the reader a brief description of how the mentoring model works.

#### Description of How Field Education Works in the Mentoring Model

In the mentoring model, a student is placed in a ministry setting, such as a congregation, where the student works for 8-15 hours per week.<sup>9</sup> The student will do some work independently, such as teaching an adult bible study group, or visiting sick

persons. The student also will work alongside the mentor pastor. This might, for example, include going to the hospital together to visit someone who has just been hospitalized in an emergency. The student also normally carries some level of responsibility in each worship service. The responsibility will range anywhere from merely being present at worship, to assisting in leading liturgy, to preaching, to sometimes having full responsibility for the entire worship service, including planning as well as implementing all aspects of the service.

The student usually meets with the supervising pastor once a week.<sup>10</sup> These meetings are normally one-on-one meetings, rather than including other staff. The student typically brings some material for reflection. In some programs the student is given specific formats for these reflections, such as being assigned to write up a reflection paper.<sup>11</sup> Whether or not the student prepares a formal document, the student shares concerns and questions with the supervisor. Then the supervisor and student engage in conversation reflecting on those concerns.

So, for example, a student might teach a bible study class in which they mention that the biblical flood of Genesis “never really happened.” After the bible study, an older member of the congregation asks to speak to the student. This person informs the student they will be praying for their soul, based on what “that seminary is teaching you.” They let the student know that the bible is the literal word of God, and that it is “Satan’s work” to put other ideas into the student’s head. In the weekly meeting, the student turns to the supervisor and asks how best to interact with someone whose views are deeply held, but stand in complete contrast to the student’s own views.

The student and supervisor may cover a number of issues in such a conversation. They may look at how to share radically new information with a group of congregants who have never before heard or had that data, such as various ways of interpreting biblical stories. Or they might look at issues of how one functions as a priest to persons whose belief systems are fundamentally different from one's own. Another option for them would be to explore the personal reactions of the student to hearing that they are "being prayed for" due to being subjected to Satan's work. They might also look at inter-generational issues that arise as a result of age differences between the student and the parishioner.

The unique aspect of this model is that the student is dealing with an actual leader, who usually knows the characters and the situation. This is not an abstract discussion, but has the imperative of the student being highly motivated to learn how to deal with an authentic person, a real situation. The supervisor has had similar training to the student's. Therefore the supervisor knows that some seminaries teach that the biblical flood never really happened, and has had to decide how or whether or not to share that information with congregants. More than likely, the supervisor has also encountered the very same parishioner and may have shared insights about how best to relate to this person. Ideally, the mentor does more, however, than share his or her own insights and experience. They also coax the student into finding his or her own way, his or her own voice for responding to real ministry situations based in that student's unique gifts and vocational calling.

This highly individualized aspect of the mentoring relationship is both its greatest strength and its greatest potential weakness. On the one hand, the student may flourish under excellent tutelage that is customized to the strengths and weaknesses of the

particular student. However, the student may also find him or herself in a problematic ministry circumstance, or supervisory relationship. For example, the student may be put into a position of leadership in which not even the most experienced and expert leader could succeed, but the student interprets the difficulty as a negation of their call into ministry. Or a student could have a supervisor whose immaturity or insecurity leads him or her to undermine the student's growth.

The programs that emphasize the mentoring relationship see the value of learning in real situations, of being immersed into the actual tasks of ministry. They appreciate the way that on-the-scene trained interpreters will have the greatest potential to shape and support a student's formation for ministry. They see the other aspects of TFE, such as a seminar or other coursework as supporting the key learning that occurs within the dynamics of reflecting on experience with a mentor.

### Three Programs That Emphasize Mentoring for Theological Reflection

#### Introduction to the Three Programs

The next section details three programs that emphasize the mentoring component. These programs share the view that reflection as close as possible to action heightens learning and improves students' formation as leaders. The three programs I profile next are in dissimilar schools, as is evident in their differing missions and purposes. The first school, Fuller Theological Seminary, is one of the largest theological schools in the world, and has a strongly ecumenical as well as evangelical focus. The next school, the Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago, is a Roman Catholic school that prepares lay ministers for pastoral roles in Catholic parishes. The last school, Luther

Seminary, is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. It represents a minority but influential approach to field education in which students leave their campus to do a full year of full time internship within a ministry setting, usually in a parish, under the supervision of an ordained pastor. The descriptions of these three schools show that a similar emphasis on mentoring can exist in strikingly different contexts.

### Fuller Theological Seminary

#### *General description of the school*

Fuller Theological Seminary attracts students from a range of denominational and non-denominational affiliations. With just over 4,000 students, Fuller is the largest school in the 2003 *ATS Fact Book on Theological Education*.<sup>12</sup> It is located in Pasadena, California, with approximately one quarter of its students attending satellite programs.<sup>13</sup> The school sits on a compact campus in the middle of an historic city, next to Los Angeles, which is perhaps best known as the host to the Rose Parade. The Fuller campus itself, though small in size, conveys a sense of peaceful academic isolation even in the midst of the bustling energy of the city.

Fuller Theological Seminary is actually three large schools which focus on theology, psychology and intercultural studies. Together they confer thirteen degrees. Fuller Theological Seminary's identity is closely aligned with the evangelical movement. The faculty and staff affirm a statement of faith. Such a clear statement of faith perspective belies the wide diversity of students at Fuller, however. Students come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, but they are disparate also because they approach evangelical faith from a number of perspectives. For example, some would be committed to leadership within a longstanding institution, while others would prefer the stance of a

congregation that has not affiliated with an historic denomination. Thus, in spite of its strong identity as an evangelical community, Fuller Theological Seminary embraces quite a breadth of student perspectives and needs.

### *Field education program staff*

The field education program at Fuller is one of the largest and most challenging to administer. Over two hundred students are part of the field education program at any given time. Only approximately 150 of these students are located on the Pasadena campus, which means the Pasadena-based director must travel to several satellite retreats each year just to meet with students involved in field education. Just two full time staff persons run the program, with a part time office person.

Gwen Ingram, the Director of Field Education, has worked in field education for over fourteen years, the last eight as director. She is an administrator, and not appointed to the faculty. Recently she has begun attending faculty meetings. She describes herself as “not a teacher.”<sup>14</sup> Instead, she sees her strengths as clustering around spiritual direction, and attending to the spiritual development of seminarians through field education.<sup>15</sup> She divides the administrative responsibilities for the large program with a full time assistant, who interviews students and helps identify placements, as well as handles other responsibilities.

### *The field education program*

Fuller’s field education program focuses on the influence of supervisors in the learning process for students:

“The supervisor is a very important person in the life of the Fuller Seminary intern. The supervisor’s practice of ministry will become a model for the student’s own

ministry. The relationship developed between supervisor and intern often becomes the most crucial relationship the student has during his or her seminary career.”<sup>16</sup>

Ingram explains that the focus on supervisors enables the field education program to support and respect the varied needs of students. When students primarily learn theological reflection under the direct supervision of a mentor, then their diverse perspectives can be accommodated. It is unlikely that putting students into a program taught by one person, Ingram believes, would work as well to develop students to develop spiritually as Christian leaders.

Supervisors sign a certificate form, and are invited to participate in the regular ministry topics seminars also open to students.<sup>17</sup> Otherwise, there are no regular meetings of supervisors, nor any orientation and training sessions. Supervisors agree to meet weekly with their students. The field education director remains in touch with supervisors after approving them but otherwise lets them do their work without much intervention or supervision.

#### The Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago

##### *General description of the school*

The Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies prepares lay leaders for pastoral work in Roman Catholic settings. A non-diocesan school that is part of Loyola University, Chicago, the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies stands more in the tradition of a university divinity school than a denominational seminary. When I visited the campus, the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies was located in a house on the main, largely undergraduate campus north of Chicago. A recent move has shifted the Loyola Institute

for Pastoral Studies into the heart of Chicago, and off the main campus, though it is connected by frequent shuttle service.

*The staff of the field education department*

Robert T. O’Gorman, a Roman Catholic layperson with a Ph.D. in education, has served the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies for over fourteen years as its director. Since the student body ranges from 20-40 total, it makes sense that O’Gorman is the only person in the field education department, although he works closely with colleagues in the Institute. O’Gorman also teaches yearly courses to undergraduates at the University in religious studies topics.<sup>18</sup>

*The field education program*

Students at the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies locate their own ministry placements, which are then approved by the director. The students work in the semester prior to starting field education to develop their learning contract, which will focus their learning during the field education placement. Students operate in the ministry setting for ten hours a week with a supervisor. They may work in congregations, social service agencies, hospitals, or schools. Most graduates will work as parish associates, serving essentially like priests, but only in non-sacramental functions.

*Why the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies is part of the mentoring model*

O’Gorman works intensely with supervisors. He visits the ministry placements three times a year. On the first visit, he meets with the supervisor to explain the program’s expectations. On the next two visits, he observes a full hour of supervisory interactions between the mentor and student. He spends most of the hour just listening, and makes a few judicious guiding remarks at the end of the session.

This approach is only possible because of the small number of students in field education at any given time. Notice the degree of emphasis it places on the mentoring relationship. Although O’Gorman also teaches a theologically reflective seminar, he spends at least eighteen sessions in ministry settings working with supervisors to support them as teachers. This shows the degree to which, at the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies, supervisors are in the key strategic position as teachers of leadership.

### Luther Seminary

#### *General description of the school*

Luther Seminary, located in St. Paul, Minnesota, is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.<sup>19</sup> Luther places educational focus on what David L. Tiede, the President, calls the “apostolic mission of the ecumenical church.”<sup>20</sup> Randy Nelson, Director of Contextual Education, is one of the most experienced field educators working in theological education today. He has worked for over twenty-seven years as Director at Luther.

One important aspect of Luther’s curriculum is the way it combines what it calls the contextual initiative for leadership, a concurrent program focusing on contextualizing leadership education, with a more traditional model for field education. In that traditional model, students leave the seminary campus for a year of full time work in a congregation. They then return to the seminary for an additional year of study before attaining their degrees. This means that students engage in some educational activities that look like concurrent field education programs from other seminaries, but then also are placed in internships in a way that is now relatively rare at most other protestant seminaries. This report looks primarily at Luther Seminary’s full time year long internships, but it should

be recognized that the contextualized leadership initiative means that Luther views contextualization as important throughout the curriculum.

*Field education program staff*

Randy Nelson explains the central purpose of Luther's program: "At the heart of our work is the desire to get students functioning as leaders in some context."<sup>21</sup>

Luther's staffing has recently undergone a dramatic reduction, due to a transition out of a grant-sponsored expansion of the program during the previous four years. During that grant-supported period, Luther had two Associate Directors, an office manager, and one and a half additional persons working on field education. That staffing has been reduced to one full time director and an office manager.<sup>22</sup> Since approximately eighty students are enrolled in full time internships each year, and are located throughout the country, the staff has a large job just placing and then maintaining contact with the students. Randy Nelson is the most experienced field educator involved with this study. He is a faculty member and is tenured. He teaches and works with the faculty in curriculum development.<sup>23</sup>

*Why Luther Seminary is part of the mentoring model*

Luther Seminary provides an important example of a program that carries on the tradition of placing students for a full year in a ministry situation. This way of working with students emphasizes the way learning in context both employs the first two years of study, and helps set the student up for effective learning in the final, or fourth year of study. Students experience themselves as leaders for a long period of time with an intensity that is not possible to match in programs where students do ten hours per week in concurrent ministry. However, these programs, with full year internships, likewise

sacrifice the valuable aspect of TFE that other programs find so valuable, the concurrent, weekly practicum.

### Key Pedagogical Questions

#### The Pedagogy of the Mentoring Model

Before addressing the key pedagogical questions for this model, I will describe its distinctive pedagogical nature. I define pedagogy in terms of how the model constructs a learning environment. The mentoring model shapes learning through engaging the student in the experiences of ministerial leadership. The student, for example, might preach a prophetic, politically charged and poorly received sermon. In this model the student's primary learning occurs when they preach, and then hear responses from the community. The student discusses the decision to preach this sermon, their faith convictions, as well as their understandings of how pastors relate to communities through sermons. The student engages in such discussions with members of the congregation, but also with the supervising mentor.

The supervising mentor places the reactions of the congregation into a wider context. The supervisor explains how the congregation developed an allergy to politically-charged sermons, for example, when their previous pastor insisted that members vote a certain way on an issue, or demanded allegiance to particular views. However, the pastor also encourages the student that the presence of such allergies and attending strong reactions does not necessarily always indicate that preaching this type of sermon is inappropriate. The student therefore learns by engaging a larger perspective under the guidance of the supervisor

The supervising mentor has at least dual roles in working through this type of situation with the student. On the one hand, the supervisor cultivates this student's gifts for preaching in the long run, knowing the student will be preaching in many different future contexts. However, the supervising pastor usually also shares with the student the burden of having to respond to reactions from the congregation. This places the supervising mentor into a position in which they have highly relevant information to share with the student, but also have a stake in the way in which the student acts on that information.

For example, perhaps a large pledging family contacts the senior pastor, demanding that the seminary send no future interns since this intern has "preached such an inappropriate sermon." Maybe this family has been a primary supporter of the internship stipend fund. The pastor, in telling the student that their sermon raised this type of pressure, has divided loyalties. On the one hand, most pastors would want to safeguard the freedom of the pulpit, and the rights of students to make uneven efforts at various ministry events. However, the pastor will face real consequences, of losing future interns, if this intern continues to exacerbate the delicate situation. In coaching the student how to respond, or not respond to this disgruntled family, the supervisor must take several angles into account. This shapes the pedagogical environment in ways not seen in the next two models. Here, the impact of embodied ideals, of real life consequences shapes the learning experience both for better and for worse.

The downside of embedding the learning so deeply in experience comes if there is an attending lack of reference to wider texts, perspectives, and time frames. It would be the rare pastor, for instance, who could fully inform the student in the example above of

all of the relevant history and polity in reference to freedom of the pulpit. Similarly, the pastor usually would be less than objective on the subject matter of the sermon, and the way the student has presented it. This lack of objectivity is not necessarily a weakness, but it may limit the range within which the student can explore all of the issues with potential for learning. These limitations can be balanced by other aspects of the curriculum and degree requirements in a variety of ways.

### What Is the Primary Learning Environment?

In this first model the context, or ministry placement, is the main place where learning about leadership occurs. The students consider the church, the hospital, or whatever the location of their placement, to be where they are doing field education. The field educator aims to support the placement supervisor so that they are best able to engage the student's learning in context. The seminary is not where the chief learning about leadership occurs. The field educational experience is rooted in the place where the student engages in actual tasks of leadership.

Often, though not always, students in these programs also attend seminars. The work of a seminar sometimes supports the learning in context in order to make it most likely that what happens in context will be maximally beneficial. The seminar may also serve the purpose of providing some information about ministry that might not be sufficiently covered in the placement. For example, the seminar might instruct students on their legal responsibilities as mandated child abuse reporters, or give models for how to prepare couples for marriage.<sup>24</sup>

Thus the seminar supports the learning in context, which happens largely through the relationship with the supervisor. In the second and third models, the context is still a

vital part of the learning process. However, these latter models would point out that what makes the learning in context valuable is the way it is interpreted, dissected, explored and debriefed in the seminary setting. In these latter two models, the context is a necessary, but not sufficient ingredient for field education learning.

Randy Nelson, at Luther Seminary, confirmed that this distinction is an important one between mentoring programs and others: “our Lilly grant is titled ‘Learning Congregational Leadership in Context’ meaning context of congregation, and in some sense...part of what that has triggered for us is, should this be based in the seminaries, or should this be based out in the churches? And what that means to the field educator is the primary learning context is not the seminary.”<sup>25</sup> I would clarify that while all field educators value the learning potential of the context, it might be misleading to say that all field educators view the seminary as being of relatively less relevance to the learning that goes on in field education. In the second two models, the shift is made from seeing context as the primary location for learning, toward seeing the context as an important supplier of experience which then becomes the focus for reflective learning. In the second and third models this reflective learning usually does occur on the seminary campus.

#### Who Is the Main Instructor for Field Education?

In the mentoring model, the educational process focuses on the potential in what some writers call the developmental relationship.<sup>26</sup> That is to say, the relationship with the mentor enables and supports student’s learning and growth.<sup>27</sup>

One might assume that this would mean that in mentoring programs, there would be extensive training for supervisors. That is true in some, but not all programs. For

example, supervisors must take a full year course on supervision to work with Andover Newton Theological School students. Perkins School of Theology requires new mentors to complete a three-day training session in May, just prior to the start of internships in June or August. Most other schools in this model either have the extended course format or an intense training retreat for new supervisors.

Randy Nelson, of Luther Seminary, expresses a contrasting sentiment: not every program that values learning through supervision will emphasize seminary-based training of these mentors. He states: “Part of what you mentioned, Emily, in terms of the first model, is that part of the task of the field ed director is to do a lot of training and mentoring of the supervisor. My sense is that I don’t do much of that. I want a pastor as a supervisor. I don’t want to tell that pastor how to do that work. I simply want that pastor to do the ministry that that pastor is called to do, and learn from that.”<sup>28</sup> A number of other seminaries similarly do not have special training programs for supervisors, including Princeton Theological Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary.

This quote sheds light on the fact that in some mentoring programs, the seminary does not teach supervision. They see practitioners in the field are already able to supervise or mentor young leaders as a part of their pastoral work. Nelson later clarifies that he takes great care in selecting mentors. He is not simply assuming that because a pastor is leading a congregation, they will be an effective supervisor. However, neither does he assume that he would be the expert at telling a pastor how to supervise a student in a ministry situation. He makes his expectations clear to supervisors, but trusts that the supervisory work with students is related to their work as excellent pastors.

Programs vary on the guidelines they set for the weekly sessions between students and supervisors. Most programs in the survey for this project require mentors to meet with their students for one hour per week. Many programs suggest that the mentor should do theological reflection with the student during that time. For example, at Andover Newton Theological School, the handbook makes it clear that students and supervisors will focus their weekly reflection sessions on theological reflection. They define theological reflection as “bringing our beliefs (values) to our behavior and vice versa so as to discover the beliefs we actually practice in our behavior. Theological reflection is perceiving our experience through the lens of our faith as based on our tradition insofar as we can understand and interpret our personal and corporate faith...”<sup>29</sup> Other programs do not specify that the work of the supervisory relationship should focus on theological reflection. Instead, they see the skilled practitioner as working with the student to develop skills and self-awareness, and the work of theological reflection should be done through seminary coursework.<sup>30</sup>

### Who Evaluates the Student?

Another distinctive characteristic of mentoring programs is that the supervisor evaluates student learning. Clearly, if the mentor is the primary teacher, it makes sense that the supervisor is the one who also evaluates. It is worth noting however, that this brings an interesting dimension into the learning process for the student and the school. For example, it could be possible for a supervisor to evaluate the student’s theological perspective as inappropriate for the denomination’s expectations. Thus the supervisor might assess the student’s work to be unsatisfactory. The supervisor is using criteria directly linked to the orthodoxy of the denomination, and the needs of the congregation to

evaluate the student's work. This means, however, that the student who attends seminary courses that encourage questioning orthodoxy might run into difficulties in a field education placement in this model.

That is why the mentoring model is particularly appropriate in situations where affirmation of orthodoxy is an accepted value in the educational process. So, for example, in the Roman Catholic tradition, it is appropriate for priests to determine whether or not a student stands in line with church tradition, and to give evaluative feedback on this matter in the context of field education. Similarly, other denominational schools that hold to tradition and orthodoxy find this particular model to be supportive of that process. In fact, they prefer this model precisely because an accepted part of the tradition is that the clergy determine the fitness for ministry for those applying for ordination. Thus field education supervisors in this model are in a dual role, as the evaluator for the seminary (of the student's work in field education) and a key evaluator for the denomination (of the student's readiness for ministry.)

#### What Is the Role of the Field Education Department?

The next question that defines the uniqueness of the mentoring program is how the field education program conceives of its role and responsibilities. As was previously highlighted in the quote from Randy Nelson, field educators in this model do not see themselves as necessarily the experts in how one should supervise a student's formation process within the context of ministry. Instead, the role of the field educator is to identify and support others who are excellent at this work of overseeing the developmental process in the context of a relationship. TFE programs in these schools are one part, but

not the defining center, of the M.Div. curriculum. The field educator facilitates learning that occurs away from the seminary, in context.

Schools with a mentoring emphasis do not view TFE as the integrative key to the curriculum. It would be too simplistic to therefore conclude that field education is undervalued in these institutions. It is not the core of the curriculum, but it may be a highly significant aspect of student learning. There appears to be an ironic tradeoff between placing the highest value on learning in context, as in the mentoring model, and viewing field education as core to integration with the rest of the curriculum. In the third model, in which field education is in this integrative role, there is usually far less emphasis on the role of the mentor, and more stress on the ways information from the experience in context feeds back into the learning at the seminary.

#### What Is the Learning Relationship Between Abstract and Embodied Ideals?

In every experiential educational experience, there are ideas that must be translated by the learner into some sort of action or influence on action. David A. Kolb's learning cycle would be one way of understanding this relationship between the abstract and the embodied ideal. In his learning cycle, the experiential learning cycle has four major poles, a) concrete experience, b) observations and reflections, c) formation of abstract concepts and generalizations and d) testing implications of concepts in new situations. Kolb builds a theory that learners have different styles, which tend to be oriented toward entering the learning experience at one of these four stages. However, effective learners need all four of these different abilities. He poses the question, "how can one be concrete and immediate and still be theoretical?"<sup>31</sup>

This question, of the relationship between being concrete or immediate and being theoretical, lies at the heart of these pedagogical models. More importantly, these models suggest that learning occurs in the way these poles are balanced and engage the learners. In the mentoring model, the emphasis is on what is concrete and immediate (as well as long-term.) Students do not just theorize about the effects and value of moving a baptismal font, for example. In this model, they move the font, and the learning occurs in the immediate effects of that move. The supervisor may bring them toward more theoretical reflection on such a move, however, by asking questions like, “how might you have approached this goal differently?”

In this model, the supervisor embodies an ideal form of leadership. Students are not just reading articles about the importance or effect of leading people in a particular way. They are living with the effects of a leadership style, usually embodied in their supervisor.<sup>32</sup> Craig Nesson, of Wartburg Theological Seminary, put it this way: “They (the students) learn a lot from the modeling the supervisor does.”<sup>33</sup> An embodied ideal is not an example of perfection. It is an example of what happens when one tries mightily to enfold the values and principles of faith in the midst of ambiguous and complex circumstances. One of the strengths of the mentoring model is the way it focuses on the real life consequences of doing ministry in particular ways in specific contexts. This is a counterbalance to most of seminary education, in which the emphasis is on speculation and positing best options, without experiencing the particular consequences of implementing ideals.

### Conclusion

The reality of TFE is that it often thrusts students into the types of life experiences and risks that raise important developmental issues. Students are asking, “Do I belong in the ministry? Do I have the gifts required for the ministry I want to do? Can I trust the church? Do I believe what I say I believe?” This reality then burdens key relationships with interpretive tasks that will shape the student’s sense of meaning making for a crucial time of discernment and future commitments. Thus it is important to understand the mentoring dimensions of TFE, and to study the various ways programs guide and support the development of these key relationships.

When mentoring is the focus for TFE, emphasis rests on learning in context. In terms of Kolb’s learning cycle, the emphasis in this model is on concrete experience. One key benefit in this model is the way it highlights partnership with practitioners in a way that gives equal weight to learning through experiencing actual ministry. The emphasis on mentors means that student experience may vary based on the quality of supervision they encounter. The other components of the field education program, such as the seminar and the integration with the rest of the curriculum will usually still be part of these programs. However, these components will carry less weight, and usually serve to support the key learning that occurs in context.

## Chapter 6

### Reflecting Through Practica Model

#### Introduction

#### Overview of Reflecting Through Practicum Model

In the model that focuses on the reflective seminar students learn the arts of leadership through reflection on experience with their peers. In this model as in the others, students also work with mentors and relate their experiences to the entirety of their coursework. The work that students do in context, under supervision, is important in its own right as legitimate ministry. The relationship between field education and the rest of the curriculum also is of value. However, in this model, programs place the greatest weight on the way that the field education seminar provides peer support, allows for spiritual development, instructs in theological reflection, provides information on ministry tasks, and helps students integrate theory and practice.<sup>1</sup>

These seminars look to the student's work in context as a source for material on which the student can reflect in the seminar. This enables the student to build new capacities for self-understanding, and fresh abilities to frame their reasons for taking faithful actions.

This chapter will follow the same format as the last, by first presenting three case studies of actual programs to demonstrate the range of ways programs place the highest degree of energy into the reflective seminar. The chapter then explores the way this model configures programs in relation to five key pedagogical issues. First, however, I

paint a picture of what it looks like when the greatest emphasis is placed on the seminar learning environment.

#### Description of How Field Education Works in the Practicum Model

In the practicum model, students work in a ministry setting with a supervisor. They normally reflect with that supervisor on a regular basis. However, the student also must work in significant additional ways to reflect on their ministry in the context of a practicum. As was explained in chapter four, these seminars serve a number of diverse purposes. What distinguishes these models is that they focus the energies for achieving these purposes in the seminar.

Here I will describe the ways this model orients toward the student experience that was sketched in the previous chapter, when a congregant responds to his or her comment that “the biblical flood never really happened” with a declaration they would be praying for the student’s soul due to the work of Satan in the seminary. The student will follow a protocol for processing the incident. That set of rules will have been assigned by the group facilitator, and will have been demonstrated by other students who have processed their incidents in similar ways.

The student might be enrolled in a seminar whose primary purpose is to build peer support. The protocol in such a seminar would probably be for the student to share without interruption. The group might have made a formal confidentiality agreement, which ensures that the student could share his or her doubts, personal reactions, and other issues without fear that it might undermine their progress toward ordination. The facilitator might follow a procedure that such sharing is then responded to by group members, or stimulates other sharing. Or the group might simply listen and agree not to

respond verbally at all. The student experiences the relief of sharing their feelings about the incident with a group of supportive peers.

The student might, however, be enrolled in a seminar with a purpose of enabling students to use such incidents to identify issues in their family of origin that have the potential to become complicating factors in their ministry. This, for example, is the focus of the second quarter of field education at the Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry. There the student might follow an established approach to identify how this incident evoked issues from the student's family history. So the student might share, for example, that the parishioner reminded him or her of the judging father, or the nurturing grandmother who was so influential in their developing sense of themselves. The group would then reflect with the student on how they could disengage from unhealthy family dynamics and history in order to more effectively pastor in this type of situation.

In contrast, the student might be in a seminar whose primary purpose is to inculcate habits of theological reflection. The facilitator might challenge the student to name the theological themes present in this incident. The facilitator might encourage the student to articulate his or her theological stance in relation to the key issues present. For example, the group might engage in biblical exegesis, and explore whether or not the account of the biblical flood was historical. They might also explore doctrines, such as the omnipotence of God, or biblical inerrancy. Then facilitators and peers would help the student look at how to engage as a bible study teacher around these theological issues.

Ultimately, the distinguishing feature of this model is the way it encourages the students to bring their issues into dialog with their peers and with an expert facilitator, who enables them to expand their perspective on what has happened. This model values

the use of established educational processes, such as case method, guided discussions, and peer support to help students learn. The model carries Kolb's learning cycle into the next step, beyond concrete experience and on to reflection on experience.<sup>2</sup> When readings are assigned in relation to ministry experience, this model may also carry learners to the third part of Kolb's learning cycle, in which learners engage the abstract principles related to, or theoretical aspects, of experience.

Just as the mentoring model had some inherent disadvantages, so also the practicum model has potential problems. In the example provided, one could see the potential for a group of peers to speculate on the dysfunction of the parishioner, and to commiserate with the student on having to field such comments. The group's orientation toward support can lead to a tendency to assign blame. This type of approach can inhibit learning for the student. In contrast, the student who works with an expert mentor might find the mentor explaining the more complete picture of that person's perspective in ways that expand the student's self-understanding as well as develop greater capacities for relating.

Similarly, the disadvantage of the practicum model is the way that issues become abstract and removed from consequences. Peers could advise the student to approach the situation in ways that sound better in the seminar setting than in the context of a church Sunday school classroom. Furthermore, the group relies on the accuracy of the student's reporting abilities to gather information for its reflection. In the mentoring model, often the supervisor has independent sources of information that can correct student's incorrect interpretations of events. In the seminar, there are few ways to check on the student's level of accuracy in reporting how they and others function in the ministry setting.

## The Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry

### General Description of the School

The Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry's is one of 28 Jesuit universities in the United States and more than 100 around the world.<sup>3</sup> The School of Theology and Ministry, a recent addition to the University, "is a creative model of ecumenical cooperation, working in a unique partnership with a Jesuit university and the churches of the Pacific Northwest. It cherishes the Jesuit mission of the faith that does justice, which respects the dignity and gifts of every person and attends to the life-fulfilling dimensions of every culture." The mission statement for the School of Theology and Ministry says its purpose is to "shape leaders and transform lives. It fosters learning that roots students in their own Christian faith tradition. It engages them in vibrant dialogue with other faith traditions and helps them to appreciate the diversity of God's manifold creation and to prepare them for pastoral and spiritual leadership."<sup>4</sup>

The School of Theology and Ministry is based in an unusual model of partnership between Catholic and ecumenical sponsorship. The school "has two wings (the Institute for Catholic Theological Studies or ICTS and the Institute for Ecumenical Theological Studies or IETS) that structure its formal relationships with regional faith communities. The ICTS serves the Seattle Catholic Archdiocese and other dioceses, as well as religious communities to prepare Catholic laity for pastoral leadership in the Catholic Church or for spiritual leadership in other settings." This Institute works in partnership with the IETS which "serves ten denominations and two religious umbrella groups in the Northwest and prepares women and men for lay and ordained ministry in their specific

traditions. STM ecumenical graduates achieve the appropriate competencies for leadership in their own denomination.”<sup>5</sup>

This ecumenical partnership means that Catholic lay leaders who will serve parishes in pastoral roles are students learning alongside leaders from many other denominations, which is a highly unusual arrangement. Similarly, protestant seminaries usually enroll a only small minority of students intending to serve Roman Catholic parishes. At the School of Theology and Ministry, protestant students learn next to an unusually large contingent of Catholic students. This ecumenical partnership brings an important flavor to the leadership formation at the School of Theology and Ministry. The school, located in the Pacific Northwest, has received generous support from the Lilly foundation that has enabled it to expand and enrich its contextual education programs in recent years.

#### Field Education Program Staff

Richard Cunningham is the sole staff person for the School of Theology and Ministry field education program. He works with adjunct faculty who teach seminars, and has occasional part-time support from graduate students. With over forty students in the program at a time, this level of staffing is well below the average for field education programs. Cunningham, a Disciples of Christ ordained minister, brings a background in pastoral as well as campus ministry to his work in directing field education. He holds a D.Min. in addition to the M.Div. Cunningham has been directing the field education program for over seven years.<sup>6</sup>

### The Field Education Program's Use of Theological Reflection Practica

At Seattle University, the distinction between the teaching assigned to mentors and that relegated to seminars is quite clear. Cunningham states that “the onsite supervisor is the person who has the skill set, they’re not being asked to do theological reflection. They are supervisor because they are already an expert.”<sup>7</sup> When Cunningham was asked to expand on what he means by this, he focuses on what he calls “skill development.” Mentors are expected to “review and plan student activities and assignments, discuss vital issues, debrief student’s work, provide encouragement and challenge to the student.” They also do engage in evaluative interaction, in which they “provide feedback to the student at the end of each quarter.”<sup>8</sup> Mentors have significant roles as developers of skills from their expertise. This is distinguished from the teaching of theological reflection, which this program associates uniquely with its seminars.

The field education manual expands this conception of the differing roles of the mentors and the seminar. It states:

The internship provides the contextual arena for the student’s primary work. It is here that the student finds source material for doing theological reflection. The experiences and incidents of interacting with the people at the site provide an array of scenarios from which to choose. The On-site Supervisor is expected to guide the student in the work of the site. The School of Theology and Ministry does not ask the On-site Supervisor to present or cover a body of academic material. Rather, the Supervisor is to engage the student in the events of ministry that present themselves. The Supervisor and the student may engage one another in a teaching/learning moment examining a particular incident.<sup>9</sup>

The program focuses the energies of mentors on building skills and evaluation. Mentors are not expected to fulfill the role of teaching the rudiments of theological reflection.

This leaves the major work of teaching theological reflection to the seminars. The program teaches students the art of theological reflection in two major steps. The first is to introduce students to a variety of models for theological reflection. The second is to ask students to formulate their own particular method for theological reflection.

The first step begins with a lengthy introduction to theological reflection in the STM field education manual. The manual reviews the general meanings of theological reflection. Next it presents six major models for theological reflection. These are Killen and de Beer's, which it calls "a framework for theological reflection."<sup>10</sup> This is followed by a model for theological reflection from George Hunter, which focuses on theological reflection for problem-solving (using four steps.)<sup>11</sup> These two models are based in the ideas of theological reflection covered in the literature section of this chapter of the dissertation.

The next four models, however, present less conventional models for theological reflection. These are one by Mary Hunt, which weds traditional processes for theological reflection with the identification of a central image or symbol that leads to action.<sup>12</sup> The next model focuses on storytelling, a model constructed by John Shea.<sup>13</sup> Then there are two models associated with social and cultural analysis. These six models form the core of what students learn about theological reflection at STM through its seminar structure.

The next step for students to learn theological reflection is by writing a number of papers, such as case incidents and verbatims. The students in the seminar discuss the papers, and the seminar leader instructs the students in one of these models for theological reflection as they discuss the paper. Students experience at least several of

the models for theological reflection as they reflect on actual incidents experienced and reported by students.

Then students at STM complete an additional, significant requirement. Students have written papers and participated in seminar discussions based on one or more of the major models for theological reflection held up by the field education program. They must next devise their own method of theological reflection, containing specified elements, but still uniquely their own. This engages students in intentionally becoming theologians themselves, rather than just parroting the theological analysis of others.

The STM field education program focuses students on an incremental learning journey about theological reflection, which culminates in their claiming their own capacity to construct theological process. Such an intensive, developmental learning process requires the kind of close supervision and trained leadership that is more likely to occur in a seminar setting than in the context of a mentoring relationship.

Cunningham would not want to downplay the importance of what mentors teach. To say this program emphasizes the theological reflection practica is merely to describe the level of educational intensity and energy that flows into this aspect of the program. The way that the seminars are carefully crafted to work in tandem with the manual's introduction to theological reflection is one example of the degree of emphasis that is placed on learning theological reflection in the context of a syllabus-based, faculty-led seminar setting. Students are clearly expected to learn theological reflection in a practica, although of course they learn theological reflection precisely because they are also engaged in ministry in context with a mentor.

### Other Aspects of the Field Education Program at the STM

Cunningham describes the field education program as being based in “the integrative model of formation.”<sup>14</sup> Students at the STM program for field education begin their journey with a deep exploration of their own call to ministry. They find their own field education placements, which must be approved by the Director of Field Education. They take field education in a three quarter sequence, serving for eight to ten hours per week in the ministry setting. Students meet with supervisors weekly and also read extensively for their seminars. As has already been mentioned, the program has high expectations for students also producing written materials, including book reviews.

The STM prepares lay leaders for Catholic parishes. As was true in the IPS at Loyola University, Chicago, many of these lay leaders will head up parishes in ways traditionally associated only with priests. However, there will still be distinctions in that they will not carry responsibilities for sacraments. These Catholic lay leaders are forming as leaders in another way that differs from the usual Roman Catholic priestly tradition; they are developing their leadership capacities as peers with leaders from protestant denominations. Since most priests prepare for ministry in strictly Catholic settings, these leaders will emerge with a uniquely high level of ecumenical understanding.

### Why the STM Field Education Program Is Part of the Practicum Model

The Seattle University STM field education program demonstrates a real difference between a program that focuses on mentoring and one that focuses on the seminar. This program looks to the seminar for intentional instruction in the arts of theological reflection. It sees this as largely distinct from skills for ministry. While

mentors may themselves be highly capable of theological reflection, this program does not assume that this means they will be highly capable of teaching a student how to do theological reflection. A quote from the manual clarifies this type of distinction: “The internship provides the contextual arena for the student’s primary work. It is here that the student finds source material for doing theological reflection.”<sup>15</sup>

This quote highlights a way of distinguishing a program using the mentoring model from one using the practicum model. In the practicum model, the work in context is a way of gaining experience, of gathering materials that make the work of the seminar possible. This, while an overstatement, shows that the emphasis is on the seminar as the location of primary learning. The context, while providing valuable opportunities for students to do real ministry as well as develop skills, is also the source for material for crucial learning about how to do theological reflection. This stands in contrast to the perspective of mentoring programs, which see seminars as exercises that support the learning that occurs primarily in the context of the ministry placement itself.

### Union Theological Seminary

#### General Description of the School

Union Theological Seminary is located in the heart of Manhattan, within walking distance of Riverside Church and several denominational headquarters. Its location on Broadway, near Columbia University and Barnard College, places it at the heart of New York cultural and educational life. Union similarly is located at the heart of theological education, with its long and distinguished reputation for outstanding academic work. The nondenominational seminary educates students where Bonhoeffer studied and where

Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich taught. Its distinguished history is continued by a faculty that helps set the agenda for theological thinking in this century.

#### Field Education Program Staff

Kathleen Talvacchia served as Assistant Professor of Ministry and Theology at Union at the time of my research study. She holds an Ed.D. as well as an M.Div. The dual staffing of the field education program at Union is part of the reason it has been included in this model. Talvacchia structured the program with dual staffing intentionally so that the field educator could focus on teaching theological reflection while a full time administrator tended most of the other details associated with field education. The vision underlying this structure is that field educators are experts at teaching theological reflection, which enterprise is a full fledged academic exercise, just as teaching Old Testament or Christian history is a full time occupation for other faculty.<sup>16</sup> Talvacchia's position was as a faculty person with responsibility for teaching about theology and ministry.

#### The Field Education Program's Use of Theological Reflection Practica

In a 1998 syllabus, Talvacchia explains the educational perspective of praxis in relation to learning theological reflection:

The mere fact of working at a ministry is not enough to create the learning of this course. It is only through the process of theological reflection that field work becomes field education. The seminar class is designed to broaden and to deepen your analytic perspective on your field site context and your role as a professional in it....you will be learning how to think and learn in a praxis way, that is, allowing situations of practice to deepen and challenge your academic knowledge about theology, and allowing your academic knowledge of theology to deepen and challenge your ministerial practice.<sup>17</sup>

Although Talvacchia locates the seminar as the primary focus for theological reflection, she also notes that important training in theological reflection occurs in the process of discerning the placement. Talvacchia places an emphasis on making the work of theological reflection intentional by asking these types of questions: “How does the practical decision that I am making make theological sense? How do I integrate what I know about theology with the practical tasks of ministry?”<sup>18</sup>

Talvacchia sees the primary location for theological reflection as the seminar setting. She states: “what I try to do is to help students to ‘exegete’ an experience.”<sup>19</sup> The focus of the learning in the seminar is on theological reflection because “vocational clarity, theological reflection and social analysis skills, and a clear understanding of Christian theologies of ministry are essential tools of ministerial competence.”<sup>20</sup> She therefore broadens the sense of what it means to teach these reflective skills beyond a focus just on theology. She identifies four key areas for this work.

These four areas are: vocational discernment, theological reflection, social analysis, and Christian Theology of Ministry. She assigns readings in all four areas and students must give written responses to readings from each area. Then they employ the approaches developed through these exercises. The pedagogical underpinnings of the seminar, therefore, are that students learn the arts of leadership through four steps, which include theological reflection but are interrelated with discernment of vocation and social analysis.

#### Why Union Is Part of the Practicum Model

Union’s program, until recently when the staffing model was dramatically changed, was a model of focus on theological reflection through highlighting faculty

teaching on theological reflection. This teaching was primarily done in the seminar setting, though it also took place in other parts of the program. Students learned theological reflection as part of a four step approach to leadership formation. The program used an institutional structure that allowed administration of field education in a full-time staff person's responsibilities, enabling a full time faculty person to focus on teaching theological reflection. Union's recent institutional developments mean that a new model for field education there is still emerging.

### Claremont School of Theology

As a researcher into field education, I have a unique perspective. I not only am researching field education, I also am fully employed as a field educator. This means I bring important insights to the research, but also significant and inescapable opinions. My bias should be, I believe, fully available to the reader so that they can interpret my presentation of the entire body of material. One way for me to disclose my bias is to include a description of the program in which I work in this text.

Although my description will not be objective, its purpose will be twofold. First, it will show how I employ the ideas I have developed through this research in the particular setting of the Claremont School of Theology. The description also will make clear the interpretive lenses through which I view the many other programs I describe. It should be clear to the reader by now that although the CST program fits into the Reflecting Through Practicum Model, this does not mean that I value this model above the others. Instead, I describe this program in order to demonstrate the ways in which this model is appropriate to the particular context of CST.

### General Description of the Claremont School of Theology

The Claremont School of Theology (CST) is a United Methodist seminary that issues the M.Div, several other master's degrees, the D.Min, and the Ph.D. About half of the students are Methodist, and students from many other denominations comprise the remainder of the student body. CST has a unique relationship with the Claremont Graduate University School of Religion and the five exceptional Claremont undergraduate colleges that enables it to attract excellent faculty with expertise in biblical, historical, theological and ethical fields along with a fine faculty focused on practical theology.<sup>21</sup>

Claremont is located 35 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, which gives students access to urban as well as suburban locations for learning.<sup>22</sup> The campus is compact and its students are both residential and commuters from as far away as Arizona. The student body, similarly to most theological school student bodies, currently has a large number of young students as well as a significant cohort of second career and even retired students returning to school with a deep interest in serving their church communities. Claremont School of Theology and Fuller Theological Seminary are the two main protestant seminaries serving all of Southern California, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico. This means that many students at Claremont attend because it is the most convenient for their learning interests in the region, and not necessarily because of its United Methodist affiliation, nor even for its general reputation as having a liberal theological perspective.

These factors make for a highly diverse student body. The diversity of CST also lies in the ethnicity of its students, which includes Koreans, Pacific Islanders, as well as

students from many other ethnic backgrounds. The significantly diverse student population, partly due to CST's proximity to the Pacific Rim, gives all of the students a perspective that is global and based in encountering differences with respect and true interest.

#### The Field Education Staff

The Lilly foundation provided a grant five years ago that allowed CST to acquire its first full time faculty person with responsibilities just for field education. I am a UCC ordained clergy person and I bring a decade of pastoral experience to my work directing field education. I have directed the program for five years. The grant also supported a number of other initiatives for contextual learning that have helped shape the school significantly during that period of time. I have a part-time secretarial assistant for staff.

#### How CST Incorporates the Reflective Practica

I identified my program as being part of this model with some difficulty. Like most other field educators, I would like to achieve excellence in all of the major components of field education. At first it was quite difficult to see where I was placing the most emphasis. I felt that I was falling so short of my goals in each area that I could hardly identify a strong focus. When I started directing the program, I felt keenly the need to train supervisors, to support lay people working with students, and to do a more thorough job than had previously been possible of supporting students in their discernment processes.

These multiple commitments contributed to a sense that I needed to focus on many aspects of the program. I also wanted to improve the manual, to streamline and improve the administrative aspects of the program, and to do the important but often

overlooked work of public relations with congregations. I did not easily identify which of these many areas had the strongest focus in my work, since I had the sense of trying to catch up to a standard in each area.

When I began to interview other field educators and ask them to tell me about their programs, I almost always heard a similar story. That story was that they were embarrassed at the way their program did not begin to meet all of their goals for doing outstanding field work with students. Some suggested I should not even interview them because they felt their program still had so much work to do to meet a minimum standard. Most field educators were, like me, deeply concerned that they were unable to achieve the kind of excellence in supporting students that they felt was crucial to their learning process. Nearly every field educator sent me a manual with an accompanying note or comment to the effect that the manual was either sorely in need of revision or was indeed in the middle of being revised. Similarly, they would explain to me that they just had to make compromises when it came to placement, or other aspects of the programs. Their worried confessions helped me to see that I was following the same pattern: trying to achieve excellence in too many areas, in a way that no institution currently has the resources to support.

This realization enabled me to ask myself hard questions. I began to realize that no program had been able to achieve what I desperately wanted to, namely fully staffed and focused seminars, trained mentors, and stupendous coordination with the rest of the faculty. This led me to ask myself, if I had to focus in just one of these areas, to some cost in the other areas, where should I focus, given the institutional goals of CST? This helped me to see that in the context of CST it made sense to focus on the seminar, at the

same time as I also continued a lower level of focus on improving the other aspects of the program. I realized that the setting of CST meant it would work best to develop the seminars with excellence in teaching theological reflection.

I want to emphasize that I developed this focus because of my context. Other seminaries and theological schools have a different configuration, distinct context, and varied missions and purposes. In those contexts, it makes sense to focus more on mentors, or more on integrative work with other faculty. My emphasis on the seminars does not imply that I think this model is always or even usually superior to the other models. It makes the most sense in contexts such as CST.

Therefore as I conducted the research for this project, I began to develop clarity of focus in my own work. I realized that I could more easily release the need to focus my highest level of energy on the work of mentors than I could relinquish a spotlight on excellence of pedagogy in the seminars. I saw the seminars as parallel to the other courses at CST, all of which try to uphold a high standard of academic excellence. In that context, to have a seminar that did not demand much of students academically would, I judge, communicate a message that the work of reflection in ministry is not academic, and does not need to be intellectually rigorous. That, I realized, would undermine a central value of CST. The faculty recently has articulated that the development of intellectual rigor is one of three most important aspects of leadership formation.

At CST, the reflective seminars meet weekly for two hours. They are taught by the field education director and by four other adjunct faculty who are all practitioners. The seminars have a syllabus, with required readings of two texts. These are *How the*

*Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work*,<sup>23</sup> by Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey and *Learning While Leading* by Anita Farber Robertson.<sup>24</sup>

These texts have been selected for the ways they enable students to critique their most fundamental assumptions. The first text, by Kegan and Lahey, demonstrates the way our interior conversations with ourselves set up perceptions which then get reinforced by what we observe and experience of others. The second text, by Farber Robertson, uses the material developed by Chris Argyris to demonstrate the importance of what he calls “model II thinking” to ministerial leadership.<sup>25</sup>

The seminar teachers are trained in how to use these materials and other material to interpret the ways students perceive their ministry experiences. Students report through case studies and analyses as well as informal sharing. The objective of the seminar is to develop reflective capacity that questions foundational assumptions that shape perceptions. This type of reflective work is developed through the use of case analysis using the layers identified earlier in this chapter (theological, pastoral or personal, and organizational).

#### Other Aspects of the Field Education Program at CST

Students work in ministry settings for 12-15 hours per week concurrently with their enrollment in the reflective practica. They are placed in their settings through the field education office. Each student is interviewed at least once by the field education director, who helps them discern both the type of placement (congregational or agency-type) and the precise location. The field education director selects the actual placement for each student. Students must develop their own learning goals through a process that guides them in assessing their own competencies for ministry, as well as their areas of

greatest strength, weakness, and unknown ability. Students work with their mentors to determine which of these areas will receive the greatest focus for their learning in the ministry context.

Students meet weekly for at least an hour with their mentors. Mentors are trained during seven yearly meetings held on the CST campus. Two of these meetings include the lay committees, who also meet monthly with students. The other five meetings focus on developing the skills of supervision and mentoring. Sometimes these training sessions include analysis of cases, and sometimes they are more didactic in format. Supervisors are encouraged to attend all meetings, but are required to attend at least four of these meetings on campus, unless they are located more than 150 miles from campus.<sup>26</sup> I usually only meet one-on-one with a few mentors each year, and most often it is for counseling in cases where the mentoring relationship has encountered difficulties.

The basic philosophy that guides my administration of this program is that field education students are developing themselves as whole persons, under usually extremely challenging circumstances. This makes it an ideal time for them to reflect upon and critique their basic assumptions about themselves, and about faith in action. I want them to realize that leaders bear responsibility for the ways their assumptions determine their perceptions, and shape the decisions they make for action. I want them to do more than adopt new perceptions and assumptions, I want them to learn how to identify deeply hidden assumptions, and how to move non-defensively away from perceptions that get in the way of healthy functioning as leaders.

The field education program at CST is like most other field education programs. It includes the same major components as other programs, including lay committees,

weekly meetings with mentors, and weekly reflective seminars. These seminars are run in a way similar to most other programs. The only exception is that the CST program uses texts that are only used in a small minority of other programs. Instead of teaching theological reflection by assigning texts on theological reflection, the CST program uses secular resources that are wedded to theological perspectives by the seminar teachers. The emphasis on the practica for teaching theological reflection is appropriate to the context, where coordination with a diverse faculty and a focus on mentoring are judged to be less suitable approaches.

### How This Model Resolves Five Pedagogical Questions

#### The Pedagogy of the Practicum Model

Before detailing the answers to the five pedagogical questions for this model, I will briefly describe its particular pedagogical character. In the reflecting through practica model, the primary learning environment is a peer seminar facilitated by a faculty person, practitioner, or other leader. Students focus their learning about leadership in the context of peer reflection. Sometimes, as has already been described, that faculty person specializes in how to problematize ministerial reflection. Other times, the faculty person has another academic specialty, which they bring to enrich the dialog about ministry events. Most often, the person who facilitates the practica is a practitioner who is employed as a part-time adjunct faculty person with specific responsibility to lead field education seminars.

The pedagogy of this model relates to how reflection is structured in relationship to one's peers. Students most often present cases, or describe ministry incidents from

their placements. The teacher then responds in ways that helps the group to identify deeper layers of meaning in the student's experience, and in their presentation of it. This may mean that the teacher focuses, for example, on issues of vocation or identity formation that arise in particular incidents. Or it may mean that the teacher hones in on the student's growing self-awareness, evident in the way they talk about their role in ministry incidents. Another approach facilitators take is to lead students in identifying theological issues in given situations.

The pedagogical distinctions between the mentoring and the practica models can be divided into two major issues: what is the learning environment and who participates in the reflective process. In the practicum model, that learning environment usually is at the seminary, removed from the immediate context of experience. The distance from actual ministry settings flavors the pedagogy by emphasizing reflection after, not in the midst of experience. In contrast with the mentoring model, in the practicum model the immediate exigencies of the ministry setting do not have as much influence on the reflective work of the seminar. So in the example from the previous chapter, in which the student preached a controversial sermon, the pressures relating to demands of church members may not even be part of the discussion in the practicum.

In the mentoring model, students primarily learn by reflecting with persons in context, with whom they share leadership responsibilities. Usually this includes both their supervisors and their lay partners in ministry. In contrast, in the practicum model, students learn reflective habits by sharing information and insights with other students, under the skillful guidance of a facilitator. Although facilitators bring a diversity of backgrounds to their work with these seminars, they all share the fact that they are

leading students through partnered reflection with their peers. This aspect of the learning process, that they are receiving and giving evaluative information from and to peers, is an important aspect of professional formation.

Students sometimes learn vicariously, for example. One student may observe how another student reports that they come to a ministry situation with a very different theological stance. The student learns through listening, and by hearing that stance articulated in relation to a ministry incident, the student gains a wider understanding of how persons of faith see particular issues.

Additionally, students who do not experience something in their own setting will learn from other students who do have those experiences. So a student, for example, who performs a funeral and needs to talk about it enables students who do not participate in funerals to learn something about those ministry experiences.

Seminars most often use ministry incidents as the touchstones for the learning process. This is a pedagogical issue, because students carry the paradigm of reflection on incidents with them throughout their field work experience. A part of that paradigm is the question, how will my peers see this incident? For example, students at Claremont School of Theology are assigned a “failure case study” which they present during their first semester. They are to identify some incident in which they recognize some aspect of their functioning that is problematic. Students often report that this allows them to be relieved, instead of just horrified, when something goes amiss early in their internships. They have the thought “well, at least now I have my case study.” Similarly, students who simply share informally each week with their peers go through their week observing and considering to themselves whether or not this will be the item they will share during the

seminar time. This allows reflection in the midst of experience, as well as after experience.

Thus the pedagogy of the practicum model focuses on shaping a learning environment in which peers inform and support each other's learning about ministry. Furthermore, this model focuses on how skillful facilitation can enable a group to identify new issues, and deeper layers of meaning in ministry incidents. Its disadvantage may lie in its distance from the practical realities of ministry. The ability to engage in abstract discussion about issues enables an expansion of perspective but also may carry a less focused perspective on tough consequences of future actions. In other words, it can be too easy in the context of the seminar to ascribe motives for other's actions, and to prescribe next moves for students without necessarily remaining committed to accompanying them through the consequences of those actions.

#### What Is the Primary Learning Environment?

In this model, the focus for learning is in the seminar. Since an entire earlier section of this paper explored the curriculum for the field education practica, there is no need to summarize that work here. Instead, this is the place to observe the ways a shift in focus toward the context of the seminary as learning location changes the educational experience. In these programs, education is framed as observing incidents, analyzing them, and bringing new insights back into the experiential learning process.

The fact that the seminar is identified as a primary learning environment does not demote the worth of engaging in ministry and learning from that commitment. It merely shifts the emphasis toward the type of reflection that is somewhat removed temporally, but not disconnected, from those ministry experiences. This model views the learning in

context as necessary, but incomplete. The learning cycle is only fully rich when the experiential learning is balanced by reflection that includes analysis, theoretical study, as well as a deepening of self-understandings. Thus it is inadequate to say that learning occurs in the seminar. It is in the exchange of information between the seminar and the ministry placement that the student grows as a leader.

One of the hallmarks of an emphasis on learning in the seminar is the degree of intentionality these programs bring to what happens in the seminars. Usually in these programs, the seminar has a syllabus associated with the seminar. The syllabus normally includes reading assignments as well as other writing requirements. Students are expected to attend to the work of the seminar in a similar way that they would in other courses. In mentoring programs, this is sometimes the case, but not most of the time. The majority of mentoring programs have seminars that are either more topically related or based almost entirely in sharing and support. In contrast, the programs that emphasize the reflective practica include some type of didactic teaching and academic requirements in relation to that teaching.<sup>27</sup>

#### Who Teaches, or Is the Main Instructor?

Programs that emphasize the seminar employ differing categories of teachers to lead the groups.<sup>28</sup> Some employ regular faculty members.<sup>29</sup> Others hire practitioners, usually local pastors, who receive special training and support and are considered adjunct faculty members. Another frequent choice is to employ doctoral students to lead seminars, as is sometimes done at Andover Newton Theological School.<sup>30</sup> Finally some programs recruit persons with therapeutic as well as faith-based professional commitments to lead seminars.

The common expectation of these teachers is that they are primarily group facilitators. The expertise of the leader is not just in the arts of ministry, but also in how to engage persons in learning from each other. Thus the type of leader may vary, but this expectation, of group facilitation, remains remarkably constant across programs in this model. They are supposed to enable students to learn from and share effectively with each other. Thus it would not be quite accurate to say that the main teachers in these programs are the group facilitators. That is because ideally, students are also learning from and instructing each other.

The emphasis on facilitation does not necessarily imply that the teachers are not actively interacting and shaping the content of these seminar sessions. For example, a seminar leader might pose a provocative question, and then facilitate the ways students respond and react to each other in relation to the question. An example of such a question might be, “How do the rest of you experience Marcia’s (one of the students in the group) gifts for teaching?” The posing of the question significantly shapes what happens in the seminar. As students share their experiences of learning from Marcia, she gains new insights about her vocation as a teacher.

### Who Evaluates the Student?

In the reflecting through practica programs, the primary evaluator of students is the seminar leader. This means they are responsible for taking into account the evaluative assessments made by supervisors. The seminar leaders may issue the grade or credit for field education, or they may provide input to the director of field education, who officially issues credit. This matter also clarifies the different shape of a program with an emphasis on the practica. The supervisor might, in such a program, give a

student a highly negative evaluation. However, the seminar leader might be able to still issue credit if the student has been faithful about processing the reasons for the negative experiences in context, and developing responsibility and awareness about their part in the difficulties. This frames the field education experience as something more than what happens in context. The final value, in fact, clearly is placed on how the student processes the experience in context, and not on the student's effectiveness in context.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, it is sometimes also possible for a supervisor to give a negative evaluation of a student in a way that is entirely unfair to the student. Although this is a relatively rare occurrence, in the programs that vest someone other than the supervisor with the final authority for evaluation, there is a built-in corrective to such a possibility.

However, it might be possible that a student could be attending the seminar, and making it look like he or she was thoroughly processing experience, while the student was in fact largely absent from their responsibilities in their ministry placement.<sup>31</sup> This is a pitfall in the practicum based model. In the absence of adequate checks and balances about work in context, it is difficult to verify a student's version of what is happening. Supervisors are sometimes reluctant to report on the difficulties they are having, and so they are not always a reliable source of this information.

### What Is the Role of the Field Education Program?

In the practicum based model, the role of the field education program goes beyond facilitating the logistics of placing students in ministry settings, and supporting supervisors. In this model, the field education program maintains a significant role in the life of the seminary curriculum. The percentage of personnel and the fraction of

curricular time devoted to field education is also noteworthy. When a program has to staff four or five small groups per semester, then usually the field education director is working with that number of adjunct faculty in addition to any other field education staff.

The field educator in schools with the practicum model is almost always a member of the faculty. They may be categorized as administrative faculty, with a contractual appointment. But they usually serve on faculty committees, co-teach with other faculty, and attend faculty meetings with a vote. This indicates that the field education program in such institutions is less isolated, and more a parallel part of the overall work of the theological school than might be the case than in schools that use the mentoring model.

#### Abstract vs. Embodied Ideals

This model's use of the praxis model balances embodied ideals with abstract analyses of what happens when those ideals meet realities. However, it is also possible that in the practicum model, there is enough distance from experience that it is still possible to idealize what can and should happen. As mentioned previously, practica often make heavy use of the case study technique. One of the pitfalls of case study technique is that it can lend itself to discussions like, "well she never should have done that." Such discussions all too often can translate into "I would never do that, so I don't really need to engage in the learning about this case."

Since case studies usually are at the core of field education pedagogy in this model, the instructor's facility in using cases contributes directly to the quality of student learning. This calls for skilled and trained facilitation. None of the programs in the survey had extensive training of group facilitators. The most common practice was for

the field educator to meet monthly, or less regularly, with the teachers to process the challenges they were facing in their work with students. One unanswered question would be, if this model values the potential learning of the seminar so highly, why then do so few programs utilize persons with training specific to the pedagogical challenges inherent in this type of education? This would be true not just for the programs than employ clergy as adjunct faculty, but also for programs that utilize regular faculty. It is not clear that a Hebrew Bible professor, or an ethics professor will possess the training necessary to move a group using case studies toward genuine engagement with difficult issues related to a person's functioning in a ministry situation.

### Conclusion

The reflecting through practicum model, like the others, has its strengths and weaknesses. Its focus on using a structured situation to focus reflection both sharpens the quality of that reflection yet also removes it from its most direct contact with action. The reflecting through practicum model utilizes peer resources and support, yet does so at the potential expense of distance from those directly engaged with actual ministry and thus best positioned to evaluate varying strategic approaches to situations. The reflecting through practicum model uses practitioners to teach seminars, yet it often fails to fully equip those practitioners for the very distinct and challenging work of leading reflection in a setting which is removed from the usual ministries in which they engage. Schools using this model often have their field educators fully engaged in the crucial work in which the rest of the faculty of the school does its work. The reflecting through

practicum model instills reflective capacities in its students which emphasize the value of reflecting theologically on experience both during and after the experience itself.

## Chapter 7

### The Reflecting Through Curriculum Integration Model

#### Introduction

The last two chapters profiled the standard ways of approaching field education, which have been in existence for over twenty years in essentially their present forms. This chapter profiles a third configuration for TFE, one that is much more recent.<sup>1</sup> The field education programs in this third model are part of a larger dynamic in their institutions. In these schools field education becomes a coordinating asset in the school's overall effort to achieve integrative learning. Other disciplines, such as theology or ethics either coordinate with, or independently echo the types of integrative learning that field educators have been advocating for many years.

Common to most of the curricula at these schools is an organizational theme for learning that focuses integrative energies. These themes might be formation for ministry, training for ministry, or something less overtly framed as professional ministry, like incorporating values of diversity. Such themes give an organizing principle to the way that various disciplines interact within the curriculum. In these seminaries, field education is one element, though an indispensable one, in a broadly shared understanding of key values and purposes in theological education.

As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, a stumbling block to communication within field education has been our lack of clarity for what we mean when using particular terms. This is nowhere more true than in the use of the term integration. Therefore, before I present the model which uses the very term integration in its title, I

will give an overview of what can be signified by the term. This will help clarify the particular way I am using the term in relation to one model of field education.

During a recent curriculum revision at the Claremont School of Theology, our faculty heard an excellent presentation by our colleague Carol Lakey Hess on the variety of ways the term is used in education in general. Based on her presentation, here are some clarifying definitions for what field educators may mean in using the term integration.

#### Five Basic Areas That Are Part of the Literature of Integrative Teaching and Learning

In using the term integration, field educators are referencing five basic areas that are variously referred to in the general literature of integrative learning and teaching.<sup>2</sup> These five areas are: integrating theory and practice, head and heart, working on an interdisciplinary level, developing critical thinking, and thematically organizing the curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Theory/practice aspects of integration*

Often when educators speak of integration, they are referring to the need to bring relevance to classroom studies. They usually are thinking of building stronger links between the ways theory is taught and its applications in practice. The theory/practice aspect of integration itself has multiple dimensions. There are many discussions of how theory should inform practice, and then be modified by what is learned in practice throughout the literature of education. However, within the theory/practice studies, there are ways that the other areas I have named also have relevance.<sup>4</sup>

*Ways in which the five areas of integration are linked*

The previous example demonstrates that within the five areas I have identified, there are still more layers of what is meant by integration. Additionally, in many cases the five areas are linked in the conversation about integrative learning. For example, Baloché and co-authors, in an article on integrating professional with the general education of teachers refer to the longstanding criticisms of academic knowledge being presented in “a fragmented fashion that makes it difficult for students to make connections between subjects.” Then they go on to explain the ways this “currently is being addressed by attempts to integrate the curriculum...many faculty are working to integrate professional courses and to integrate class-based coursework with field experiences.”<sup>5</sup> Here, in one sentence, the potentially distinct ideas of interdisciplinary work and integrating theory and practice are combined as joint remedies to fragmented approaches to teaching. Thus the five areas are not mutually exclusive ways to approach integrative learning, but rather are areas that are variously combined in different educational programs.

*Teaching critical thinking with integrative approaches*

Just as there are many ways to approach the concerns of integrating theory and practice, so also there are various ways to use integrative techniques in teaching critical thinking. Teaching critical thinking is regarded as of utmost importance in many professional education programs.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, within field education, it has long been assumed that critical thinking emerges from the integration of practical ministry experiences with reflective exercises that help students analyze those experiences.

Further study, like that done in other professional education, might illuminate best practices for this type of integrative teaching within TFE.

*Integration in relation to an organizing principle of the whole*

In addition to these areas that are variously touched on in the literature on integration, there are some key ideas that are often referenced as being parts of integrative learning. First, there is the idea that integrative learning emerges from or enables looking at the whole picture rather than just the parts. This may be spoken of in very dissimilar ways. The “whole” may reference the entire *person* (including emotions, cultural background, family history, etc.), the *framework* of ideas (sometimes referred to as a meaning-making schema), the overarching *concept* that provides crucial information to interpret all other information, or the *gestalt* (in which the whole is greater than the parts, and is not necessarily arrived at through a sequential or incremental learning curve.) The whole picture, as this list demonstrates, may be variously configured: to include diverse ideas, varied parts of a person, or differing perspectives.

*Issues of assessment in relation to integrative learning and teaching*

The literature on integration also frequently references another issue that arises when schools engage this type of learning. When schools shift to uphold the value of integrative learning, roles for teachers and learners move away from traditional, long-understood definitions into new and very different territories. Teachers change from being experts in a discipline into knowing about establishing connections between their discipline and other disciplines. Students move from being passive absorbers of information to needing to demonstrate a mastery of how materials fit together. This final consideration, of shifting roles for teachers and learners, has implications for pedagogies,

learning strategies, and assessment. These shifting roles put evaluation into the forefront of the dialogs about integrative learning and teaching.

*Integrative learning as an emerging paradigm within higher education*

The Carnegie endowment has made the teaching of integration a priority through its national project, “Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect.”<sup>7</sup> The Carnegie Foundation recognizes that the very meaning of integration is still diverse, even when it is focused on integrating various forms of knowledge and information. “Integrative learning comes in many varieties: connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying theory to practice in various settings; utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view; and understanding issues and positions contextually.”<sup>8</sup> This statement clarifies that a holistic view of integrative learning recognizes that contextual understanding is part of a larger process that also includes coordinating learning approaches to learning and sources of knowledge. The Carnegie initiative has had broad influence throughout higher education, including theological studies. Its initiative gives voice to a growing trend of institutions to do more than pay lip service to the need to develop intentional strategies for integrative learning.

Definition of What Happens in the *Reflecting Through Curricular Integration* Model for Field Education

What is distinctive about these programs is that the field educator has worked extensively with the other faculty, usually during a curriculum revision, to strategize about how best to use contextualized learning to bring various parts of the curriculum into dialog with each other. The faculty as a whole has recognized that in one sense, field

education lies at the core of the entire curriculum. This does not imply it is more important, but rather that it serves a key coordinating function.<sup>9</sup>

For example, our earlier student, who taught a bible study in which he or she made a reference to how the biblical flood never really happened, would potentially have a very different experience in these schools with a focus on using field education to integrate the curriculum. In the school with the mentoring model, the student presumably discusses the matter with the mentor, and together they decide a best approach to the next steps. In the practicum model, the student writes up a case incident and discusses it with peers and the group facilitator. In the third model the hope is that this type of incident provides a galvanizing moment for multiple levels of engagement with that incident throughout the curriculum.

In this model, the student ideally would be able to discuss the incident in the integrating discussion section of the biblical studies class. The student might, for example, be enrolled in a course on Genesis, in which the student spends two of three hours in class listening to lecture, but the third hour asks students to bring actual cases from bible studies they are teaching on Genesis in their field education placements. The student raises his or her incident in the context of the discussion section, which is taught by the Old Testament Studies professor.

What happens during that discussion is a two-way dynamic. On the one hand, the professor has the opportunity to teach a very engaging segment on the role of myth and truth, clarifying and challenging the student on what one means by saying something “never really happened.” On the other hand, the professor has the opportunity to learn

from the student about the way lessons are received in the life of the church, and what types of preparation are actually most helpful in contemporary contexts.

This case points to the hope embedded in this model: that by integrating the work of field education into all courses in the curriculum, not only will students learn more holistically, but teaching will also improve by the two-way flow of information. In other words, one of the often-cited benefits of such programs is that they enable the church to influence the seminary in more definitive ways.

To expand the illustration, this student might also be enrolled in a course on pastoral care in which students similarly hear two hours of lecture per week and then have a one hour discussion section around cases from their ministry placements. Our student might bring this incident and pose the question, what further understanding could he or she develop about persons who interact with a teacher by telling them they are going to pray for their soul due to Satan working on them? Once again the advantage is that the professor is an expert at identifying issues of personality and interpersonal dynamics, and can use this type of case to solidify a central learning goal of the course. However, the professor also learns from the student about the specific ways in which these issues of interpersonal dynamics arise in the particular settings in which these students are functioning. Thus hopefully the teaching becomes more focused and relevant in turn.

Just as the earlier two models had downsides associated with their strengths, so also this third model has potential problems. While the hope is for learning to be occurring in two directions, this requires skill on the part of the teacher which is not automatic, nor is it usually a part of the professional preparation for teaching in a

theological school. So these schools need to make a commitment to developing higher levels of pedagogical skill in addition to simply adding discussion sections to lecture courses. Additionally, professors must have a philosophical commitment to learning from churches and students in order for the dynamics of mutual learning to grow.

Another concern in these programs is whether by absorbing field education into the rest of the curriculum it becomes a vibrant life-giving central dynamic, or it disappears. A simple way of putting this is, does this model mean field education is everywhere or does it mean it is nowhere? While it may seem that by putting integrating reflection into a mentoring relationship or into a practicum it is sidelined, one does have to take care to be sure that it actually still occurs on as intentional and educational a level when it is dispersed throughout the curriculum.

#### Schools That Are Representative of the Reflecting Through Curricular Integration Model

Three schools show the ways that field education programs can be part of a school-wide commitment to integrative learning. These are Denver Seminary, Western Theological Seminary, and Harvard Divinity School. On the surface these three programs are disparate, with major distinctions in the ways their field education programs work. The purpose of these descriptions is to point toward some similarities in these three programs, which suggest a pattern of similar values. There are many differences in the goals and purposes of these programs, but in each case, field education serves as a key component to the broader institutional commitment to integrative learning.

## Denver Seminary

### General Description of the Seminary

Denver Seminary is located in Denver, Colorado, and in 2005 will be moving to a new campus in Littleton, Colorado.<sup>10</sup> It draws a largely evangelical student body through its emphasis on its "...reputation for a staunch commitment to the inerrant authority of Scripture and the foundational doctrines of our historic Christian faith."<sup>11</sup> The school seeks to develop leaders who are examples of godliness and who can direct individuals and communities in spiritual growth. They do so by explicitly cultivating partnerships with congregations and pastors, who serve as mentors to students throughout their M.Div. programs.

The commitment to integration is explained by Donald Payne.

Overall, the mentoring program is an expression of Denver Seminary's commitment to an integrated educational program where the traditional barriers between academia, ministry, and spiritual formation are bridged. We do not do that perfectly, but have come a very long way.<sup>12</sup>

Payne makes it clear that at Denver, integration is the focus throughout the curriculum, not just within field education. It should be noted that while I am focusing on the integrative theme at Denver, another theme of equal importance to Denver is that of coordinating and partnering with churches. Denver cultivates a large number of mentors who work extensively with students, and the seminary also seeks to "build into churches."<sup>13</sup> A commitment to working with churches is implied within the integrating theme of training and mentoring.

Denver has a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for the M.Div. of 127 students. It offers MA degrees, the M.Div., and the D. Min. The seminary has roots in the

Conservative Baptist Association, but attracts evangelical students from many denominations. Trustees, administration and faculty are required to sign a doctrinal statement of faith yearly. The faculty developed a set of core competencies (for ministry) that guide much of the curriculum and student-based learning goal development. These include such competencies as “demonstrate a Christian world view that integrates biblical, theological, and historical truth, (for biblical worldview)”, and “minister with a holy passion, especially in the areas of natural and spiritual giftedness (for passion for ministry.)”<sup>14</sup>

#### The Field Education Program Staff at Denver

Donald Payne coordinates field-based learning at Denver, but because of the unconventional configuration of the program, it may not be accurate to denote him as the “director of field education.” When asked to list staff for field education, Payne supplied six names, and they carried titles like “missions training center director” and “campus training center director.”<sup>15</sup> Even Donald Payne’s titles do not refer explicitly to field education. His titles are Associate Dean and Director of the Suburban and Rural Training Centers, as well as Assistant Professor of Theology and Ministry.

The ways these many staff and faculty share responsibilities for field-based learning point to the nature of what often happens when field education becomes a tool for the integrative work of the curriculum. Field-based learning becomes diffuse, and its educational processes, once concentrated into one job description, become distributed out among a greater number of persons.

Donald Payne has a Ph.D. in Theology, and served for many years as a church-planting pastor prior to joining the faculty at Denver. He has served for three years in his

present position at Denver. He holds a non-tenure track faculty position. Payne's commitment to the integrative educational theme is evident in his statement that "the integrated approach allows us to get some of the make or break issues that the classroom cannot address."<sup>16</sup>

### The Field Education Program at Denver

Denver has no separate program that it labels field education. Donald Payne explains, "five years ago we replaced all field education with an intensive mentoring program."<sup>17</sup> Instead, every M.Div. student spends five semesters in what they call a process rather than a program. The process involves students setting learning goals for the M.Div, which they then strategically plan to address either through course work, field-based learning, or some combination of these. The students participate in campus-based spiritual growth groups that are led by faculty. They must have two mentors that are from off-campus for the entire five semester sequence. Students find their own placements, and must complete at least sixty hours in each placement per semester.

### Why Denver Seminary Is Included in the Reflection Through Curricular Integration Model

Denver Seminary focuses its M.Div. program on what it calls "Training and Mentoring." This focus is for the entire curriculum, not just for field education. There might naturally be some confusion on the part of the reader as to why Denver Seminary is not listed as a program exemplifying the mentoring approach for field education. Its title points to the fact that the seminary has placed a high value on the way mentors help shape leaders during the seminary years. However, since the school has absorbed the field education program into the overall curriculum with many courses explicitly

addressing issues traditionally covered just in field education, the program fits more fully into this third model.

Denver asserts that it has replaced its field education program with an intensive mentoring program. Yet in some ways traditional aspects of field education remain, including reflective groups (which they call spiritual growth groups) as well as the ways students work with mentors. Students complete learning contracts. They review case studies, and focus on learning theological reflection with mentors and in the spiritual growth groups. These elements are easily recognizable as remnants of a traditional field education program.

What is distinctive about Denver is its effort to intentionally coordinate all of the work of the M.Div. around a theme, training and mentoring, which usually is associated primarily with just one aspect of the curriculum, field education. Students build learning contracts in reference to core competencies that have been written by the faculty, who expect students will develop those competencies not just through field education, but also through the rest of the M.Div. curriculum. The relative unification of the work of the entire M.Div. around preparing leaders through mentoring is what places Denver into this third model.

### Conclusion

Denver's context is part of what makes this approach to field education appropriate. At Denver, the purpose is not integrative learning for its own sake. Instead, integrative learning fits its larger purposes, preparing evangelical leaders for ministry. Integrative methods enable Denver to present a coherent program with specific theological and ministerial purposes.

Denver can combine many diverse disciplines and approaches around similar goals as well as perspectives. The seminary concentrates primarily on preparing ministerial leaders, since it offers ministerial degrees and not those that are more academic, such as the Ph.D. The seminary has a theological perspective that is centered in its doctrinal statement. While such a uniformity of purpose and perspective is not necessary for integrative learning to be a goal, in the case of Denver it works well.

### Western Theological Seminary

#### General Description of the Seminary

Western Theological Seminary is located in Holland, Michigan. It is in covenant with the Reformed Denomination, but also identifies with the evangelical strand of Christianity. The mission statement for the school states its purpose to be to “(equip) men and women for Christ-centered, biblically based, theologically integrated, culturally sensitive, mission-oriented Christian leadership.”<sup>18</sup> The school recently underwent a dramatic change in curriculum and in its stance toward the denomination. This has led to an increase in enrollment, so that it now hosts twice as many students as it did six years ago.

#### The Field Education Staff

Matt Floding serves Western Theological Seminary as the Dean of Students as well as its Associate Professor of Theological Field Education. He estimates that he spends two thirds of his time on field education and one third on Dean and teaching responsibilities not directly linked to field education. A full time assistant interviews students and shares with him general responsibility for all areas of field education.

Floding brings a background of serving as a pastor for many years in the Reformed Denomination, with a special interest in ministries with small and struggling congregations.

Floding worked for ten years with candidates for ministry as a chaplain of a denominational college. He holds an M.Div. and a D. Min. Floding enthusiastically pursues various avenues that support formation for ministry, but states that his deepest commitment is “to conduct our program in such a way that (students) forget about requirements and focus on personal growth and preparation for ministry and never feel that they have jumped through a hoop.”<sup>19</sup>

#### How Western Coordinates Its Field-based Learning with the Overall Curriculum

At the beginning of this chapter I mentioned that programs in this model could look quite different from each other, although their common characteristic would be that field education was regarded as crucial to the integrative goals for the curriculum. In the case of Western, this means that field education permeates every minute that students are pursuing their M.Div. degree. Field education is not just one course toward the degree. It is a permanent presence that accompanies every other course the student takes while in seminary. This makes field education a constant referent, a location of support, and a key location for bring theory and practice together through reflection.

Students have been interviewed before arriving on campus, which enables the director to place them in advance. This means that students start field-based learning while they also begin their classroom studies. Their first work in field education is in a Seminar in Congregational Studies, using Nancy Ammerman’s work as well as others.<sup>20</sup> The purpose of this course is to teach students how to study their congregations, so that

throughout seminary, as well as hopefully upon graduation, the students can bring essential tools of interpretation to their ongoing learning processes.

In the second semester of their first year, students begin to design a learning plan for their M.Div. program that will span the next five semesters. They build this learning plan in consultation with their mentors who have been working with them during the first year. The students focus on five of seven suggested areas in order to build these learning covenants.<sup>21</sup> The students will be engaged in field education for ten hours a week for the entire three year sequence of the M.Div, and are also encouraged to do summer internships. Students design five approaches to their learning covenants, which might include taking a course on pastoral care or doing a focus on preaching during a summer internship. Students also engage in inter-cultural internships.

During their three years of study, students at Western are continuously enrolled in ministry reflection seminars that are lead by a contracted ministry professional. They call these peer groups. Their purpose is to provide personal support, to be a “place to reflect collegially on their learning covenants,” as well as to prepare students for key formative learning experiences such as the cross-cultural immersions.<sup>22</sup> These seminars provide a core of support for the theme of Western’s curriculum, formation for ministry.

Recently Western’s theological school faculty made a firm commitment to integrative learning. This was related to a central theme which they call a “steadfast commitment to formation across the curriculum.” The faculty “made a decision to push field education toward the center of the curriculum.”<sup>23</sup> Initially they focused on what they called “learning web seminars” that were intended to support integration and affirm the web of learning between the teaching church, peers, the classroom, and the web.

Floding describes how the faculty wrestled with this approach in way that illuminates the general struggle when faculties seek to build scaffolding for integrative learning. He explains: “(the learning web seminars) met one hour a week, and (were) identified as the (key) integration point.” He then describes what can sometimes result from placing one course into the position of coordinating integrative work: “that excused some people from integration throughout the curriculum.” Additionally, their initial effort included assigning faculty to each of the web groups and this “drew faculty from other things.” The Western faculty concluded that the best way to work toward the goal would be to “(get) ride of the seminars, (and) re-integrate across the curriculum.”<sup>24</sup> This re-integration across the curriculum is accomplished in part by having field education take up some of the integrative tasks. Additionally, a number of courses have integrative seminars paired with them. These integrative seminars are based on an action reflection educational model.

### Conclusion

Western’s experience with attempting to integrate through the use of a seminar is one that is not uncommon among institutions seeking to bring intentionality into their expectations of integrative learning. The fact that they experienced the first integrative seminars as possibly ineffective uses of faculty time as well as drawing the task of integration away from other courses highlights the dilemma in these programs. The question they have to address is: where is the integrative learning actually occurring? Is it occurring everywhere or nowhere? Is it so localized that the effect is actually the opposite of integrative, but rather draws integration away from other disciplines? Is the approach to integrative learning, in contrast, so generalized that it cannot be definitively

identified? Additionally, these programs, as well as programs in the other models, need to ask whether or not the application of theory to practice is truly balanced by the reverse dynamic of practice informing the formation of theory.

### Harvard Divinity School

#### General Description of Harvard Divinity School

Harvard Divinity School is located in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Its spot on the Charles River makes for a picturesque and college-like setting. Yet the Boston area is hardly an ivory tower; there are many opportunities for urban ministry within walking distance of the school. Students at Harvard Divinity School engage in ministries that range from social justice ministries to congregations in urban and suburban settings.

Harvard's commitment to educating religious leaders dates to its founding in the early part of the seventeenth century. At that time, Harvard College's central purpose was to educate clergy. In the intervening centuries the Divinity School has become part of a much larger university, with a worldwide reputation. This provides opportunities for students and faculty to pursue diverse academic interests simultaneously with their theological studies.

#### The Field Education Program Staff at Harvard

Harvard's field education program is part of the Office of Ministry Studies. The Office of Ministry Studies (OMS) is configured as its own department within the Divinity School, like others that report to the Dean. The entire staff is supportive of the field education program, although the OMS carries responsibility for many other programs areas of study as well. The Director of Field Education, Dudley Rose, has served in the

office for eleven years. He also holds a title of Assistant Dean for Ministry Studies in addition to being the Director of Field Education. Rose has served for seven years in top leadership positions for the Association for Theological Field Education (ATFE) and has specialized interests in leadership education. He holds an M.Div. and is a member of the Divinity School faculty.

Rose shares responsibilities for field education with several members of the OMS staff. He regularly partners with Stephanie Paulsell, Associate Dean for Ministry Studies and Senior Lecturer on Ministry in teaching courses about leadership and theology. The Chaplain of the Divinity School also serves as a resource for field education.

Another important aspect of the Harvard Divinity School staffing is the reality that schools in Boston coordinate with each other to a greater extent than most other geographical regions. This means not only that students can select from a wide range of placements that have been cultivated by other theological schools, but also that they have access to support and resources at the other schools. This becomes most significant when the theological schools work in partnership to train supervisors for theological education.

#### How Harvard's Field Education Program Relates to the Overall Curriculum

Harvard's field education handbook succinctly states its purpose as to "develop experience and competencies in the arts of ministry, under supervision, in actual situations in ministry."<sup>25</sup> Students must complete two units of field education, of which at least one must be concurrent with studies. Students must enroll in a reflective seminar, and they work with mentors. They find their placements at a yearly faire at which students, supervisors and potential placements gather to discern possible mutual interests. Students do not receive credit for field education, but it is required for graduation. About

half of the students begin field education in the first year, but they are not required to do so. Students may take more than two units of field education.

The title for the reflective seminar is “Meaning Making: Thinking Theologically about Ministry Experience.” Students may choose from two possible formats for this seminar. One is structured like the seminars described in the previous chapter, where students present and analyze cases. The other format is more topical.

Harvard seems to be moving from the second model, which puts most of its energies into reflective practica associated with the field education program, toward the third model. This is evident in the description of the curriculum revision that is now underway. Rose summarizes: “We are actually in the beginning stages of a curriculum re-design, and are already beginning to implement greater senior faculty involvement in teaching students to think theologically about ministry experiences.”<sup>26</sup> Additionally, faculty persons at the Divinity school are working to include theological reflection seminars as companions to most, though not all, courses. The purpose of these seminars is addressed by the following statement from the field education handbook: “The Divinity School values ministry experiences as integral to the theological enterprise and thus encourages students to use them to test, challenge and formulate analysis.”

### Conclusion

Harvard coordinates its curriculum around a central value of diversity. As the field education program manual puts it: “Harvard Divinity School has a highly diverse student body. We have students of many nationalities, races, ethnic origins, religious traditions, and sexual orientations. Our understanding of ministry and theological education requires that as a matter of policy this diversity be affirmed and all our students

be treated with respect in all facets of their education for ministry, including in field education placements.”<sup>27</sup> This value of diversity shapes the way integrative learning is understood, as a dialog between differing points of view. The field education handbook details one aspect of this type of dialog, which is at the heart of the curricular theme.

“Partnership implies a dialogue, a bi-directional flow. In the set of relationships stated above, it comprises a flow of theological conversation that seeks to integrate experiences in ministry and classroom education for ministry in such a way that each is informed by the other.”<sup>28</sup>

While the curriculum revision is still underway at Harvard, the present understanding of that revision makes it likely that the outcome will focus on ways to build interdisciplinary bridges of understanding. This means that Harvard is moving toward the third model for field education, and will look to its program for continued resourcing for the growing emphasis on integrative learning and teaching.

### Five Pedagogical Questions

#### The Pedagogy of the Reflecting Through Curricular Integration Model

The pedagogical environment of this model focuses on building ways for students to reflect on ministerial experiences in connection with their other coursework. This sometimes means that a preaching class draws upon a sermon preached in the field education setting. In other cases it means that more classical disciplines, such biblical studies, include a discussion component within the regular course. That discussion section may focus on case studies, or on the same type of generalized sharing that goes on in the practica associated with the second model. The difference between the second and third models would lie in the ways the third model draws an overt connection between field experience and the work of particular courses. This requires the professor

to do the integrative teaching that makes explicit the ways principles from his or her discipline are evident in particular cases or ministry events.

For example, in schools operating within the integrative model, the student who preaches a prophetic, poorly received sermon might reflect on that incident in numerous contexts. The student might reflect on the sermon in a preaching class. There, the professor might critique the form or delivery of the sermon, or use the incident to guide reflection on how one earns the right to preach prophetic sermons in community. The student might also reflect on the sermon under the guidance of a biblical studies class. The professor might guide the student in drawing connections between post-exilic literatures and prophetic preaching experiences.

Sometimes, schools with this third model for field education also include an integrative process of assessment of the student's progress through the M.Div. curriculum. Thus, the student might also reflect on the ministry incident described above in the context of a middler review. The student might, in such a school, name the incident as a crucial one in the formation of her call, her sense of vocation, or her growing disenchantment with the institutional church. In the schools that include an integrative component of assessment, the student thus reflects over a continuum in such a way that individual incidents become part of their overall learning, or their broad-based assessment.

### What Is the Primary Location for Learning?

In these programs, it is difficult to state what the primary location for learning is. In some ways, students learn in all of the courses. In other ways, they learn in context. These programs are attempting to locate learning in the interplay between context and

classroom, without singling out the field education classroom as the single location where field education questions and concerns attain relevance to the coursework.

### Who Are the Main Teachers?

In this third model, one can typically identify the same teachers as are listed in the first two models. Usually these programs have seminars, with the same sort of leaders as were described in the previous chapter. Likewise, they have mentors who work with students, helping them form and develop professionally. What is distinctive in this third model is the wide faculty buy-in on the idea that the core concepts usually relegated to field education now become a part of the content of each of their courses. Faculties in traditionally classical disciplines see it as part of their goals to get students to reflect on their work in context, using the tools of their disciplines.

In these schools, integrative learning is seen as the work of students and of faculty. The traditional understanding was that it was up to students to integrate differing subjects with each other. Given this understanding, institutions have not usually taken responsibility for supporting integrative learning. Students usually carry the major burden of figuring out how to integrate their studies. Researchers in educational studies have recently found that in addition to expecting students to do the hard work of pulling key ideas together and learning from conflicting presentations of ideas, faculties now are developing initiatives to teach intentionally for integration.

Integrative learning requires work. That is hardly a new concept, except for the way that schools now recognize the work should be shared between students and faculty. What is new, and notable in this third model for TFE is the way that schools construct what some researchers call “institutional scaffolding to support integrative learning.”<sup>29</sup>

Such scaffolding might include assessment programs that include case studies that are evaluated by a faculty team, as a necessary step toward acquiring the degree. Another form of scaffolding is the compilation of a learning portfolio that documents a student's work in many areas, both practical and academic. The portfolio then becomes the focus of an assessment team as they evaluate a student's overall readiness for ministry.

A new trend in educational theory weds the idea of intentional learning, which is the work of students, to intentional teaching, the work of curricular reform and building learning communities. The reality is that "intentional learning may also require scaffolding that extends beyond individual courses."<sup>30</sup> The learners, as well as the teachers, need supportive structures that frame integrate learning.

Assessment tools that support integrative learning have been missing from many theological schools. It is one thing to name integration as a value in the goals or mission statements, but without intentional educational design the experience of truly deep integrative learning is left to chance. Programs in this third model are part of a systematic approach to provide institutional scaffolding for integrative learning. The field education programs in these schools serve in a crucially supportive, and often though not always coordinating role.

The idea that support for integrative learning goes beyond individual courses, or student initiative alone, lies at the heart of this third model for field education. In these programs, field education participates in, and may sometimes orchestrate, a larger project that goes beyond individual courses to support intentional learning for integration.

### Who Evaluates?

Assessment takes on added importance when there is an institutional commitment to integrative learning. Appraising integrative learning is much more complex than assessment that looks at less intricately connected forms of learning. Researchers in education have found that “integrative evaluation ...impl[ies] more collaboration among faculty to identify key points and elements of integration.”<sup>31</sup> This need for faculty coordination in assessment means the faculty persons need to identify precisely what types of connections they want students to make. Then faculties must determine how students should demonstrate they are capable of making such connections.

These issues relating to assessment are part of why field education becomes a crucial player when institutions decide to focus on integrative learning. Field education has years of experience with various approaches to evaluation. This is because assessment of readiness for ministry is often part of the expectations of field education. This can mean that when assessment in general is reframed, field education holds some tools for discussion and understanding that will prove useful to the new assessment interests within the overall M.Div. curriculum. For example, some schools use case studies as the heart of assessment. Often the field educator has the highest level of experience in case teaching.

### What Is the Relationship Between Field Education and the Rest of the Curriculum?

In the first two models for TFE, the field education program is an often highly valued, though somewhat isolated part of the overall curriculum. In general the curricula in these institutions are fragmented between academic disciplines, which is an issue that has plagued theological education for many years.<sup>32</sup> Professors from differing disciplines

teach students largely in isolation of each other, with students learning biblical disciplines simultaneously with historical disciplines, but not with these two subjects coordinated or integrated in any intentional way by the professors.

The field education programs in this third model do not simply serve as a relief valve for other parts of the curriculum, doing the integrative work that is neglected elsewhere. Instead, in these programs, the integrative work for field education is hardly distinguishable from integrative work occurring elsewhere in the curriculum.

Sometimes the field educator is the resident expert on how to contextualize learning, but that is not necessarily the reality in all of these programs. Other faculty persons are often equally focused on integrative work that includes contextualizing the materials in their courses.

It would be an overstatement to describe the theological schools in this third model as being the only ones in theological education with integrative learning. Neither should the schools in the third model be interpreted as being unique in placing a high value on field education. Instead, these schools place field education into a particular role in relation to the overall commitment to integration. In other schools, field education may also be seen as instrumental to crucial learning goals throughout the curriculum. Furthermore, many professors within other schools employ innovative forms of integrative learning. The distinction I am making here is between schools where integration has become the most important organizing principle of the curriculum vs. schools where it is one of many values within the overall educational plan.

Many times field educators describe their positions or their programs as marginalized within theological education. However, it is interesting to observe that if

field education is in a somewhat atomized relationship with the rest of the institution, it may not be so much a reflection on field education; it is a shared pattern with other parts of the curriculum. Theological studies, for example, may be no more integrated with ethics than is TFE. There may be some efforts to coordinate field education with other coursework, but this coordination is relatively minimal.<sup>33</sup> In this third model, however, the field education program plays a critical role in one important aspect of student learning across the curriculum: integration.

### The Meaning of Integration in Education

There are many complexities involved in moving toward a commitment to integrative learning. These include assessment, coordination of coursework, and the definition of the desirable types of connections to be included in the curriculum. Making a commitment to integrative learning requires major shifts in faculty conceptions of their work, and in student perceptions of their responsibilities. This complexity means that it is currently rare for field education programs to find themselves as a coordinating hub for work that is occurring throughout a curriculum focused on integrative learning.

### Summary of Seminars That Engage Integrative Learning Through TFE

Integrative learning is the goal of many educational institutions and programs. However, as has been shown above, what precisely is meant by integration is sometimes difficult to pinpoint. Upon defining integration, there may be more or less agreement over its desirability as a goal. The word itself, as well as the concepts behind it, holds significant magnetism amongst educators. The issue, however, becomes far more complicated when actual programs are designed and implemented with the purpose of

supporting and evaluating integrative learning. Integrative learning, while an attractive goal, is an elusive concept to grasp and convert into learning experiences.

In general, most field education programs support integrative learning goals of their institutions in two major ways. First, the field education program usually supplies the most sustained learning opportunities in ministry contexts. Often these field-based learning opportunities carry the weight of leadership for the students, which makes them laden with potential for ripening of students' perceptions and insights.

Field education does more than supply a location for learning that is crucial to integrative processes. Field education also supplies a method for supporting integrative learning, which is the reflective process so evident throughout the entirety of this dissertation. Many courses now adopt integrative learning seminars as a method for supporting a process to put the content or material from the course into meaning-making contexts. Field educators have years of experience facilitating and strategizing for just these types of learning experiences. This puts field educators at the crossroads of important new initiatives for educational growth through integrative learning.

However, since field educators have not come to any tighter consensus on what is meant by integration, it is possible that they do not yet have the language and theory in a format that would make their insights readily accessible to others in theological education. For example, when I began sharing this third model with groups of field educators, they often disagreed with me that there could be programs that featured integrative learning in ways that were more prominent than others. It took some time for me to discover how imprecise I had been in using the term "integrative learning."

At first, field educators made the assumption that I was referring to the integration of theory and practice, or of head and heart. These two types of integration, which I would identify as distinct, if related types of integration, were not what I meant in using the term. The field educators were quite right to object to my use of the word “integration,” because they thought I was saying that some programs were focused on integrating theory and practice, while others were not. Their objections helped me to sharpen my insights about what I was actually observing.

I began to realize that although most field education programs do focus on integrating theory and practice, not every program is part of an institution-wide commitment to such integrative processes. I noticed that some schools seemed to unify their curriculum around a theme, and that it was in these schools that field education took on highly creative and innovative shapes. It was as if everything had been tossed up into the air, and when things landed, field education was shifted in location just as nearly every other discipline had altered ways they approached their topics and goals.

This is when I began to realize that the goal of curricular integration is one that is not at the top of every institution's list. While most do decry the effects of fragmentation of disciplines, not every institution sees curricular integration as necessarily the best remedy to the problem. This is why it is important to emphasize that the programs in this third model may seem to be the ideal, while in fact this approach is not universally feasible or appropriate to the diverse needs and purposes of theological schools. Not every school focuses its mission on preparing ministers around one unifying theme. Many value the fact that non-uniformity of approaches and non-conformity between disciplines produces ministers of differing gifts and perspectives.

However it is also not necessarily the case that every school in this third model will have a uniform mission or approach. Another school that I considered including in this third model is Pacific School of Religion. For several years they have employed a person in the field education department whose sole responsibility it is to help all of the faculty design contextual components for their coursework. This contextualized learning may look quite different, and even have differing purposes, between professors and across disciplines. Strictly speaking, the goal of this approach is not so much to integrate various pieces of the curriculum with each other. The goal is to integrate each piece of theoretical learning with practical circumstances that assist in learning and even in forming or revising the theory. This is integrative learning, certainly, but not with a goal of necessarily achieving a unified perspective. Certainly Pacific School of Religion's approach is a significant and highly valuable variant on the way I have described the model for integrative reflection.

I suspect that schools will continue to develop creative and disparate approaches to what they see as integration. In some cases this will mean integration around a particular theological perspective. That usually would be a tightly focused doctrinal perspective, such as is present at the first two schools profiled here. However, it also might be integration around goals that are based in radical social transformation, or in celebrating diverse religious perspectives. It need not therefore be a conservative theological perspective that focuses learning around an integrative theme.

### Conclusion

Here I describe an emerging model for TFE. It is based in trends that are developing throughout theological education, which place emphasis on interdisciplinary work that integrates experience with theory. Further study will be needed to fully identify how TFE programs evolve in relationship to these emerging trends in theological education as a whole.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusion

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on this project's implications for further study. I explore several major questions based in the research. First, I scrutinize the meanings in the existing diversity of methods, purposes, and structures of TFE. After that I examine the question that follows the project's conclusion that one of the widest shared purposes within TFE is to teach ministerial reflection. The question is, what difference does it make who teaches such reflective practice, and in which contexts? Next, I look at how the key role of the field educator implies a need for further scrutiny of their formation process. A concluding section lays out possible arenas for further study in relation to the three categories identified in this project.

#### The Existing Diversity of Methods, Purposes, and Structures in TFE

I describe how theological schools develop widely diverse ways to work with students in connecting their practical ministry experiences with their formation for ministry. This project shows that there is no singular profile for what TFE looks like in the schools studied for this project. However, the paper argues that the approaches to working with key parts of field education: the supervisor, the practicum, and the rest of the theological school curriculum, can be clustered in three basic categories. Thus the project explores diversity, and also shows there are some patterns within the diversity.

I do not argue for the virtue of one category of TFE over another. Implicit in my approach is an acceptance that there are many ways to implement the ATS standards, and that such a multiplicity of approaches is a sign of the strength and maturity of TFE. Furthermore, this project's documentation of diverse approaches demonstrates that programs make tradeoffs between emphasizing one element over another. Thus the report suggests that most programs could benefit from identifying reasons for their choices, which might then enable them to live gracefully with the inherent strengths and weaknesses of such choices.

I do not, however, wish to suggest that it makes no difference how schools develop their TFE programs, nor what place those programs have in relation to the rest of the curriculum. Clearly these issues do matter a great deal in how well students prepare for ministry. Instead, I am arguing that there will be various ways to configure excellence, but we do not yet know enough about the reasons for and consequences of our choices to identify superiority or weakness when we encounter it in TFE programs.

Field educators need further research in order to know the questions to ask of programs to identify excellence or problems in what they do. Some programs, for example, might have outstanding training for supervisors, while others have no training at all. This study has not provided sufficient information for us to know in which cases this disparity is of concern or is not. Similarly, some programs require extensive reading and writing for the practica, while others do not. This study has not answered the questions of when such requirements are a sign of superiority and when the lack of such requirements indicates a concern. Field educators could explore ways to identify when such disparities

are consistent with differing methods and purposes, and when such discrepancies point to problems of standards.

There is one more implication of my work in describing TFE's diverse methods and pedagogies. I have gathered and interpreted data, and built a preliminary map of the terrain of TFE. Up until this project, it was impossible to know what was and was not happening within TFE. This project has begun to answer a few of the questions about what is happening within TFE, but it is not yet a comprehensive description of everything that matters within TFE. The project's value may be in something other than a completely scientific description of the phenomenon of TFE.

The project's greatest contribution may be in the way it demonstrates the simple value of observing and describing actual phenomenon. Research-based observations provide potential material with which to address and replace invalid assumptions. A healthy dynamic emerges when a discipline pursues research-based information to inform the assumptions that guide decisions. The project's worth may lie not so much in answering all of the relevant questions about TFE as in encouraging a dynamic in which field educators address fundamental questions by gathering data and forming protocols for interpreting that data.

### Who Teaches Ministerial Reflection?

One of the project's key purposes was to develop three categories of pedagogies for the most common approaches to TFE. An important distinction between these pedagogies as described in the project was in their differing ways of teaching ministerial reflection. In the first model, a wise guide engages a student in experiential learning, and

teaches reflection through interpretive guidance in context. In the second model, an expert in facilitating peer-guided work enables reflection on vocation, experience, spiritual practice, and academic/theoretical connections in the context of a seminar. The project proclaims that a different pedagogical experience accompanies the work in context vs. the work with peers in a practicum. Then the third model shows another view of how students learn to reflect: by engaging in integrated work throughout the curriculum, rather than by being focused on any singular given teacher or experiential context.

The question about whether or not teaching ministerial reflection is a specialty in and of itself lies at the heart of these contrasting models. Is teaching ministerial reflection something that excellent practitioners can do as a part of their broader ministerial responsibilities? Or is it something that outstanding theological educators accomplish as they integrate their academic disciplines with other academic disciplines and with field experiences? In contrast to these first two stances is a third view, that field educators are specialists in how to problematize the learning of ministerial reflection. This last view is based in a conviction that ministerial reflection, and the teaching of it, is something that is linked to but not quite the same as practice, and is also wedded to but not identical to other integrative work done in academic contexts.

Each of these views about who teaches ministerial reflection carries implications for the role of the field educator. In the first view, where the teaching of ministerial reflection is most adequately accomplished by practitioners in the field who accompany students in experiential learning, then the field educator's role is to link students with effective supervisors. This may entail training supervisors, or it may be a primarily

administrative function of identifying those who can do this work, and logistically working through which students fit best with which teachers.

In the second view, which sees ministerial reflection as the desired outcome of thoroughly integrated academic and field experience, the field educator serves as a resource person for other theological educators. The field educator's job may be to arrange contextual learning experiences, or to strategize with theological educators about how best to develop contextualized components in their coursework. The field educator may be one teacher among peers with no greater and no lesser expertise in teaching and facilitating the integrative work that engenders ministerial reflection.

In contrast to these perspectives is the view in which the teaching of ministerial reflection demands particular training and skills. In this outlook, the field educator is a specialist whose discipline is the art of problematizing the learning of ministerial reflection. This implies a different role for the field educator, one in which the field educator is responsible for establishing curriculum, teaching, and assessing in a way that is not as strongly implied in the first two views. The field educator associated with this view therefore not only teaches the practicum, but also works with every other aspect of the program, including the supervisor and other theological educators, instructing them on the specific issues related to teaching ministerial reflective practices.

The question of who teaches ministerial reflection relates to other foundational beliefs about whether or not such reflection represents a distinct discipline akin to other academic disciplines, or not. Field education could develop studies that would further document differing ways theological schools answer this question of who teaches ministerial reflection, and what difference it makes to the formation of leaders.

### A Need for Further Scrutiny of the Formation Process for Field Educators

The previous section discussed ways that field educators serve in widely divergent functions within theological schools. They can primarily be administrators, or mainly serve as regular faculty, or some hybrid of these. The discussion above linked these diverse roles partially to the philosophical perspective of the theological school on who teaches ministerial reflection and how. The many of ways field educators serve in theological schools contributes to the fact that schools have little that can help them determine qualifications for field educators, nor standards for how to determine which candidates to employ.

As was mentioned in Chapter 4, there is no established path of preparation for the work of theological field education. Field educators bring a range of academic backgrounds, including D.Min. as well as Ph.D. degrees or, in a minority of cases, an M.Div. as the terminal degree. The doctoral degrees are in a host of differing disciplines, with no concentration available on the specific work field educators do within theological education. Some doctoral work done by field educators stresses education; other focuses on ministry issues, while others have deliberated on theological topics. One could argue that each of these brings value to the work of the field educator. The question we face is whether or not there is additional work field educators might do in order to prepare specifically for the teaching and curriculum development some will do in TFE.

I would suggest that this issue of lack of explicit formation for field education is a question that merits considerable study. There are several questions embedded in this issue, including whether or not the field educator is a specialist in problematizing the learning of ministerial reflection. In addition to this previously identified issue, there also

is a question of whether or not the community of field educators suffers from a lack of common language and understanding which is a result of not having studied together, and not having worked together sufficiently on shared concerns.

For example, this project sponsored a full day workshop on competencies and their use in TFE. Participants learned a great deal from each other in the workshop, but the lack of shared definitions for competencies, the pedagogies associated with them, and their purposes was still palpable. A more detailed research-based convening of field educators might raise the level of understanding of how ministry competencies can best be employed within TFE programs. Currently, there is insufficient forum space for such issues to be addressed in ways that strengthen the field's capacity to fully explore diverse options and concerns.

Even as field educators develop their professional collaboration, questions arise about responsibility for professional development of field educators. Theological schools bear some responsibility for the ways in which they rely on untested assumptions about what kinds of backgrounds adequately prepare candidates to fill the field educator position. Theological schools widely assume that someone who has demonstrated pastoral excellence, and has done quality graduate work will meet the qualifications for being a field educator. These assumptions stand in stark contrast to the type of preparation usually associated with other faculty and administrators in theological schools. Theological schools typically would not consider employing a faculty person in a specific field without a doctoral degree in that discipline. Similarly, they would most often hope to hire an administrator with demonstrable experience in the field for which they will be employed. If no experience has been demonstrated, it would be assumed that

a senior associate would extensively mentor that new faculty or administrator. This raises the question of how to address the problem: is it the work of theological schools to provide better avenues for preparation for field education? Or is this the province of the professional association of field educators, ATFE? In the end, it is for the benefit of student learning that we address this pressing concern of adequate preparation for the important work of directing a field education program.

#### Further Study Related to the Three Categories Identified in This Project

In this concluding section, I explore what further research work might be done to verify and expand the usefulness of the categories identified by this study. I come to these conclusions based on the forums in which I already have presented this dissertation's results. These include a faculty retreat for one of the Hebrew Union Colleges (in May, 2004, Los Angeles,) as well as the biennial gathering of ATFE (in January of 2005, Toronto.) From these various presentations I have heard at least the following suggestions for further study:

- What is the validity as well as usefulness of the third (reflecting through curricular integration) category?
- Can other major categories be identified (possibly including more of a focus on teachers other than supervisors in context)?
- Do categories relate to specific types of schools (e.g. denominational, university affiliated, etc.)?

- Do different categories do a better job of supporting particular leadership competencies or styles (e.g. is the first category more hierarchical and better to support orthodoxy)?
- What further benefits and costs might be identified in relation to operating within each category (e.g. in congregational relations, staffing, student learning)?
- Do schools shift between categories, with intentionality, and if so how? Is this possibly a matter of progressing from one category to another?
- What considerations might support schools in selecting which category they should develop for their program?

This concluding section is a call for further research around these and other issues about what pedagogies operate within TFE, and to what effects. I would consider it an honor if others within education were to refine and debate the worthiness and validity of these preliminary findings in such a way as to further the quest for excellence with TFE.

## Appendix A

### Survey

Theological Field Education Research Survey, 2003  
 Designed to be completed by the Field Education Director  
 Please return either by email (MS word document) or by snail mail to:  
 Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology, 1325 N. College Ave.  
 Claremont, CA 91711 (909) 447-2529 [eclick@cst.edu](mailto:eclick@cst.edu)

Date

Name (and correct title) of Director of Field Education:

Social Security Number of Director (required for issuing the stipend).

Length of time in present position.

### Institutional Data

Name of School:

Mailing Address

Email                      @                      Phone: (      )

FTE of School (give total FTE, and then total FTE for M.Div.)

List all degrees offered by school:

List all degrees requiring field education.

### **Structure of Theological Field Education Department:**

Are there additional staff (beyond the director) assisting with field education? (List anyone other than the director. Include titles and designate as full or part time.)

Does your job description include responsibilities outside of field education? What are those responsibilities? How is your time divided?

### Program Design

Describe the various options for how to complete field education. If several field education experiences are required, describe each in detail.

Amount of credit issued for field education. (Give totals of academic credits, and how they are earned.)

# students in field education (The question is designed to list the total at any given time. You might list totals for each quarter or semester if there is a significant variance over the course of a year.)

Year(s) field education occurs. (For example, is there any component of field education in the first year of the M.Div. program?)

### **Structure of Reflective Seminar:**

*Most programs require some type of reflective seminar. Sometimes these occur weekly, in other schools the timing is once a quarter. The “reflective seminar” generally involves a meeting of students with their peers and a facilitator to reflect on practices.*

Is there a requirement for some type of reflective seminar? Describe the seminar.

When and how often does the seminar convene?

How many students average in a seminar?

Reading/Academic Requirements for seminar/How does the seminar promote theological reflection?

Who resources/teaches/staffs reflective seminar? (Are they faculty, pastors, Ph.D. students, the director of field education, etc.)

Describe the qualifications of reflective seminar leaders. Who selects and then supervises their work?

### The Field Education Manual or Handbook

How did the field education manual come into being? (Include who wrote the manual, and how long ago it was updated/revised.)

Do you have separate manuals for supervisors and students?

Are you actually using the manual? How?

What are the gaps between the manual and actual practice?

**Placement in Ministry Settings:**

Describe the placement process. (Please give details, such as who screens the placements and how, who designates where each student will serve, etc.):

Hour requirements for field education (For example, must a student work a certain number of hours per week in their ministry setting?):

How do mentors (usually pastors) guide student interns?

What kinds of expectations do you have of the mentors? How are those expectations communicated? What type of theological reflection do they engage/how/why?

Do you have a list of competencies for ministry? (If you do have such a list, please send a copy of the list along with this survey.)

What part of the program supports the development of these competencies?

**Relationship of Director of FE with the Rest of the Theological Faculty:**

How do you work collaboratively with other faculty? Co-teach? Develop curriculum? On committees? Teach portions of courses?

Does the director hold a faculty position? Tenure track?

**Background of Director of Field Education:**

How did the field education director enter academic work?

Give the educational background of the director. (If you are currently pursuing a degree, include that information as well.)

List the most influential people/books for the director.

Has the director published in the area of field education?

Describe other aspects of your program not specifically addressed by these questions. Are there aspects of your program that you particularly want to uphold for working well?

## Appendix B

### Table of Respondents

*March, 2004*

*Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology*

First Name	Last Name	Institution	Title	No of yrs	Visited Site	Interview in Person	Phone Interview	Ret'd Survey	Attend Consultation
1. Walter J.	Kime	Ashland Theological Seminary	Do not have information on survey	9.0				X	
2. Samuel	Johnson	Boston University School of Theology	Director of the Office of Professional Education	8.0				X	X
3. Barbara	Mutch	Carey Theological College, Regent College	Charles Bentall Chair of Pastoral Studies	7.0			X	X	
4. Jane	Maynard	Church Divinity School of the Pacific	Do not have information	8.0			X	X	
5. Glenn	Nielsen	Concordia Seminary, St. Louis	Director of Vicarage	13.5			X	X	X
6. Donald	Guthrie	Covenant Theological Seminary					X		
7. Donald	Payne	Denver Seminary	Associate Dean and Director of the Suburban and Rural Training Centers	2.0			X	X	X
8. Donald	McCrabb	Dominican House of Studies	Director of Pastoral Field Education	4.0			X	X	X
9. Bruce	Stanley	Duke Divinity School	Director of Field Education	Do not have information		X			
10. Gwen	Ingram	Fuller Theological School			X	X		X	X

11. Mark	Fowler	Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary	Director of Field Education and Assistant Professor of Church Leadership	3.0	X	X	X	X	X
12. Gary	Pearson	Golden Gate Baptist	Do not have information	12.0			X	X	X
13. Katherine	Kyte	Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary	Assistant Director of Mentored Ministry	4.0				X	
14. Dudley	Rose	Harvard University Divinity School	Assistant Dean for Ministry, Director of Field Education	11.0	X	X	X	X	X
15. Jeffrey	Mahan	Iliff School of Theology	Director of Ministry Studies, Professor of Ministry, Media and Culture	15.0		X	X	X	X
16. Robert	O’Gorman	The Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University Chicago	Professor of Pastoral Studies, Director of Field Education	14.0	X	X	X	X	X
17. Randy	Nelson	Luther Seminary	Director of Contextual Education	28		X	X	X	X
18. Lynn	Rhodes	Pacific School of Religion	Associate Professor of Ministry and Field Education	20	X	X	X	X	X
19. William	Bryan, III	Perkins School of Theology	Director of Intern Program and Professional Formation	5.0				X	
Isabel	Docampo	Perkins School of Theology	Do not have information						X
20. Harry Austin	Freebairn	Princeton Theological Seminary	Do not have information	10.0		X		X	X
21. Donna	Duensing	San Francisco Theological Seminary							
22. Richard	Cunningham	Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry	Assistant Professor and Director of Field Education	7.0		X	X	X	X

23. Paul W.	Stevens	South-western Baptist Theological Seminary				X			
24. Kathleen	Talvacchia	Union Theological Seminary	Associate Professor of Ministry and Theology	9.0	X	X	X	X	X
25. Cynthia	Lindner	University of Chicago School of Theology	Director of Ministry Studies for the Divinity School at The University of Chicago	1.0		X			
26. Craig	Nessan	Wartburg	Academic Dean and Director of Internship	10.0		X	X	X	X
27. Youtha	Hardman-Cromwell	Wesley Theological Seminary	Director of Practice in Ministry and Mission	5.0	X	X	X	X	X
28. Matt	Floding	Western Theological Seminary	Director of Formation for Ministry	7.0		X	X	X	X

Additional Schools Polled for Information on Length of Service

<b>school</b>	<b>name</b>	<b>length of service in position</b>	<b>title</b>
"	Don Bubna	15	Director of Internships
Alliance Theological Seminary	Brent Hoffman	4	Associate Director of Internships
Asbury Theological Seminary	Barbara Holsinger	.5	Director of Supervised Ministry
Bethel Theological Seminary	Greg Meland	1.5	Director of Formation, Supervised Ministry, and Placement
Catholic Theological Union	Avis Clendenen	1	Director of MA in Pastoral Studies, Professor of Pastoral Studies, Director of Field Education
Columbia Theological Seminary	Lee Carole	20	Associate Professor of Supervised Ministry
Covenant Theological Seminary	Luke Bobo	1	Director of Field Education, Assistant Dean for Training Ministries
Drew University Theological School	Virginia Samuel	20	Associate Dean for Contextual Learning, Director of Supervised Ministry
George T. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University	Louise J. Treadwell	6	Coordinator for Mentoring and Ministry

Interdenominational Theological Center	Michael Dash	18	Associate Professor of Ministry and Context, Director of Field Education
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	Connie Cline	8	Director of Field Education
McCormick Theological Seminary	Joanne Lindstrom	5	Director of Experiential Education and Field Studies
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	Albert Bean	3	Director of Supervised Ministry, Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary	Byron Johnson	18	Director of Field Education and Associate Professor of Church Education
Reformed Theological Seminary	Dr. Don Fortson	7	Director of Field Education, Assistant Professor of Church History and Practical Theology, and Director of D.Min.
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology	Patricia Gould-Champ	5	Director of Field Education and Professor of Practical Theology
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary	Julian Motley	10	Director of Denominational Relations and Placement
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	Stephen Drake	5	Director of Supervised Ministry Experience, Assistant Professor of Christian Ministry
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	Mike Wilson	.5	Director of Field Education
Talbot School of Theology	Mike Boersma	17	Associate Professor of Christian Ministry and Leadership, Director of Field Education and Placement, Director of Seque (a grant study program), chaplain of Talbot, Director of Alumni Support Ministries
Tyndale Seminary	Alan Grills	8	Director of Supervised Ministry and Internships, Associate Coordinator of the Pastoral Program
Yale University Divinity School	Barbara Blodgett	5	Director of Supervised Ministry

Average years of service for both groups: 8.6

## Appendix C

### Titles for Field Educators

<b>1. Academic Dean and Director of Internship</b>
2. Assistant Dean for Ministry, Director of Field Education.
3. Assistant Director of Mentored Ministry
4. Assistant Professor and Director of Field Education
5. Associate Dean and Director of the Suburban and Rural Training Centers
6. Associate Dean for Contextual Learning, Director of Supervised Ministry
7. Associate Director of Internships
8. Associate Professor of Christian Ministry and Leadership, Director of Field Education and Placement, Director of Seque (a grant study program), chaplain of Talbot, Director of Alumni Support Ministries
9. Associate Professor of Ministry and Context, Director of Field Education
10. Associate Professor of Ministry and Field Education
11. Associate Professor of Ministry and Theology
12. Associate Professor of Supervised Ministry
13. Charles Bentall Chair of Pastoral Studies
14. Coordinator for Mentoring and Ministry
15. Director of Contextual Education
16. Director of Denominational Relations and Placement
17. Director of Experiential Education and Field Studies
18. Director of Field Education
19. Director of Field Education
20. Director of Field Education
21. Director of Field Education and Assistant Professor of Church Leadership
22. Director of Field Education and Associate Professor of Church Education
23. Director of Field Education and Professor of Practical Theology
24. Director of Field Education Assistant Dean for Training Ministries
25. Director of Field Education, Assistant Professor of Church History and Practical Theology, and Director of D.Min.
26. Director of Formation for Ministry
27. Director of Formation, Supervised Ministry, and Placement
28. Director of Intern Program and Professional Formation
29. Director of Internships
30. Director of MA in Pastoral Studies, Professor of Pastoral Studies, Director of Field Education
31. Director of Ministry Studies for the Divinity School at The University of Chicago
32. Director of Ministry Studies, Professor of Ministry, Media and Culture
33. Director of Pastoral Field Education
34. Director of Practice in Ministry and Mission
35. Director of Supervised Ministry
36. Director of Supervised Ministry

37. Director of Supervised Ministry and Internships, Associate Coordinator of the Pastoral Program
38. Director of Supervised Ministry Experience, Assistant Professor of Christian Ministry
39. Director of Supervised Ministry, Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew
40. Director of the Office of Professional Education
41. Director of Vicarage
42. Professor of Pastoral Studies, Director of Field Education

## Appendix D

### Schema of Formation Using Original Pedagogical Models, Later Revised

Characteristics	Emulation	Theological Reflection Seminar	Integration with the Entire Curriculum
Key Distinctions Between Each Category	Field Ed. establishes effective mentoring or coaching relationships in the field.	Field Ed. carefully designs reflective process that takes place in relation to field experience.	Field Ed. partners with Theo school to form interlocking relationships between each aspect of curriculum, student life e.g. WTS “Formation” =intentional theme explicitly addressed in each class.
Definitions	Emulation is coaching, not cloning.	Seminars exist in all programs, but in these they often exert the most influence.	Integration of the seminary’s perspective on the curriculum. NOT automatically integration of “head and heart” nor “theory and practice.”
Where does Field Ed program stand in relationship to the theological school?	TFE has “add-on” feel to it, though it may be highly valued and respected.	TFE has “add-on” feel to it, though it may be highly valued and respected.	All of theo school faculty sees itself as involved in field ed. —as (re) defined— field ed happens as much in their classroom as anywhere else.
What is the primary route of leadership formation?	Student develops own leadership style as artistic living legacy of prior generation’s learning through leading.	Students grow through developing reflective and analytical capacities— taught primarily in seminar.	Students mature thru “cross-pollination” of classroom info-based learning, classroom reflection, + experience.
How does vocational discernment occur in relation to the field ed. experience?	Mentors play crucial role in determining student’s “fitness” for ministry by what they observe of the student in the field.	Vocational discernment is tied to the self-awareness students develop through studying case studies and verbatims.	Vocational discernment not necessarily a key piece of the field ed. experience.
Who or what process is likely to be most influential to the student’s development?	Mentor upholds ideal by nurturing, coaching.	Seminar inculcates habit of theo reflec, establishes reflection on the “ideals” which exist in theological frameworks.	Any faculty person from the theological school.

How does the influence in the above category occur?	Through the personhood of the leader -mentor's personhood embodies trad, student intern=legacy	Through the emphasis on reflection on action, using categories of theological reflection.	Through the capacity of a faculty person to partner with a student in building resonance between their subject and the student's concerns.
What overall competency does the typical student develop?	How to creatively apply tradition in new context.	Self-awareness, peer reflective practices, categories for theological understanding of experience.	Student "integrates" various aspects of the M.Div. curriculum.
What is the primary location for reflection?	Emphasis on reflection-in-action, concrete experience.	Student does real ministry in internship, but field ed's major contribution = teaching how to reflect on that exp. afterwards.	Emphasis on analysis in any classroom setting (including homework.)
	Student emulates mentor-of internship, childhood, etc.	Reflections might contradict mentor's influence, might question mentor's habits of ministry.	Student develops thru integration of self, exp knowledge
Links between classroom learning and leadership formation.	Student learns "tradition" in classroom, then learns artistic application of tradition through coaching by mentor.	Internship exp develops awareness of student, helps student gain quality exp to bring into reflection in relation to classroom learning.	Reflection: serves purpose of integration of all the learning throughout the M.Div. experience.
Desirable types of placements.	Placement needs to provide adequate exp for student to demonstrate and develop abilities for ministry.	Multiple types of location might be equally suitable e.g. "My soup kitchen exp taught me I need a lot of structure."	Location/type of placement of relatively small imp—what is imp is the theo school e.g. "I went to WTS, Harvard, etc."
Relationship of placements to school.	School provides students as resources to churches, who in turn expect partnership in helping pastors develop mentoring abilities.	Placements may not be organically connected to school. Field Ed screens and develops placements.	Placements listed in printed, bound theo school document (in other words, they are claimed as being part of the school.)

Where and what do students “prove?”	Student on trial under highly responsible tutorage of mentor. Can you demonstrate an ability to do ministry?	Student’s feet held to fire in seminar: are you self-aware? Can you reflect theologically?	
	Ideal is embodied-how does an actual person work out the inconsistencies and controversial demands of faith?	Ideal is disembodied, therefore never wrong (caught between irreconcilable ideals), never conflicted. Ideal-theo constructs, reflection on self vs. ideal, abstract	Looking for a match between the abstract and the embodied ideal—premise is can compare to abstract, embodied, or both—comparison of behavior.
	Contextualized, quality of mentor, systemic		

## Appendix E

### Regional Gatherings, Fall 2003

<b>Location and Date</b>	<b>Boston, Massachusetts September, 2003</b>	<b>Ontario, California October, 2003</b>	<b>Indianapolis, Indiana October, 2003</b>
Attendees And their institutions	Matt Floding, Western Theological Seminary	Richard Cunningham, Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry	Donna Duensing, San Francisco Theological Seminary
	Harry Freebairn, Princeton Theological Seminary	Donna Duensing, San Francisco Theological Seminary	Mark Fowler, Garrett- Evangelical Seminary
	Don Mc Crabb, Dominican House of Studies	Gary Pearson, Golden Gate Baptist Seminary	Gwen Ingram, Fuller Theological Seminary
	Youtha Hardman- Cromwell, Wesley Theological Seminary	Lynn Rhodes, Pacific School of Religion	Jeffrey Mahan, Iliff Theological Seminary
	Sam Johnson, Boston University	Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology	Craig Nesson Wartburg Seminary
	Dudley Rose, Harvard Divinity School		Glen Nielsen, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis
	Kathleen Talvacchia, Union Theological Seminary		Randy Nelson, Luther Seminary
	Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology		Robert T. O’Gorman, Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago
			Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology

## Appendix F

### Participants in Newport Beach, California Gathering, March, 2004

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Becky Bane	Claremont School of Theology
Scott Cormode	Claremont School of Theology
Emily Click	Claremont School of Theology
Isabel Docampo	Perkins School of Theology
Matt Floding	Western Theological Seminary
Mark Fowler	Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Gwen Ingram	Fuller Theological Seminary
Samuel Johnson	Boston University
Jeffrey Mahan	Iliff School of Theology
Robert T. O’Gorman	Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies, Chicago
Donald Payne	Denver Seminary
Dudley Rose	Harvard Divinity School

**Appendix G****Nashville, Tennessee Meeting Participants, October, 2004**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Emily Click	Claremont School of Theology
Scott Cormode	Claremont School of Theology
Michael Dash	Interdenominational Theological Center
Abigail Johnson	Emmanuel College
William Kondrath	Episcopal Divinity School
Katherine Pershey	Claremont School of Theology
Robert T. O’Gorman	Institute for Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago
Dudley Rose	Harvard Divinity School

## **Appendix H**

### **Literature review**

#### Introduction to the Literature Review

Literature from diverse sources informs this study of TFE. The value of drawing on disparate academic fields to enrich TFE became clear during the research stage of the dissertation. Field educators discussed scholarly resources from educational and leadership literatures at four regional meetings. This literature review explores the same literatures in greater depth, and shows how TFE might adopt theoretical tools from the literatures. The useful literatures include adult education and development, leadership education, and theological education as well as the literature specific to TFE. This chapter shows how these literatures relate to the concerns of TFE in order to build an interpretive foundation for study of TFE.

The approach of using several literatures differs from the normal pattern of a literature review for a dissertation. Usually, a literature review focuses on one specific literature that informs the dissertation. By focusing on one literature, the reviewer establishes the relevance and contributions made by the researcher's work. This dissertation varies from that pattern because of the scarcity of research and literature within TFE. As I will show in the section below on the literature of TFE, there are just a few articles and texts by scholars within TFE or about TFE. This dissertation uses related literatures to widen the base of published inquiry into TFE to enable dialog about research-based conclusions and assertions.

There is a wide gap within the literature specific to TFE. What are missing are studies that view the pedagogy or epistemology of TFE as worthy objects of study. Instead, the literature assumes a general knowledge of what TFE involves educationally, and what are its aims. The literature then focuses on resources that improve existing practices. There has not been a basic critical study of the fundamental assumptions about the directions and approaches of TFE.

Given the existence of this gap, this review turns to related literatures to do more than provide a substantial base of literature about TFE. It turns to these fields to show how TFE might borrow tools of interpretation and analysis from adjunct disciplines. Associated fields inform, challenge, and inspire TFE. This dissertation consults diverse literatures in order to describe TFE as well as to build a community of inquiry.

Literatures with a common educational theme form the nucleus of concern for this review. I begin by showing the way the existing literature within TFE points to arenas of concern upon which future scholarly work might build. The survey then turns to the ways transformative learning theories are directly relevant to TFE. The subsequent section explores experiential education. Next, I look at the relevance of multiple intelligence theories of learning, particularly focusing on emotional intelligences. Following the survey of adult education literatures, the review shifts to an examination of adult development literatures. The next section explores the ways the literature of leadership education informs TFE. Then there is a study of the theological education literature. The literature review concludes with a summary of the interdisciplinary nature of TFE.

### The Literature of Theological Field Education

Published research within TFE has slowed to a trickle in recent years. During a period of a little over fifteen years, from 1980-1995, there was a significant amount of research about and publishing within TFE. A small group of field educators published articles from this era in five volumes called *Key Resources*.<sup>1</sup> The last edition of *Key Resources* was published in 1986. The cessation of publication of the *Key Resources* volumes left just a few outlets for theoretical and research-based scholarship by field educators.

The history of scholarly publication within TFE stands in stark contrast to the contemporary situation. Today, few articles and books focus on TFE as a field worthy of study. This review, therefore, surveys most of what has recently been written about TFE or by field educators.

#### Journals Relating to TFE

The few journal articles about TFE compose an uneven description of TFE. One important venue for publications by and about field education is *Theological Education*, the journal of the Association of Theological Education (ATS). The 2001 volume of *Theological Education* focuses on field education's contributions to theological education. This issue contains the most recent writing and research by field educators who reflect on the role and identity of the field educator within theological education.<sup>2</sup>

Another article in the 2001 issue of *Theological Education*, by Charlotte McDaniel, explores the history of publications by field educators. McDaniel summarizes why it is important for the field to have a base of publications: "dissemination of work through publications is one avenue for providing information about an organization or its

work, as well as establishing its scholarly interest.”<sup>3</sup> She finds, through a survey, that although field educators do publish scholarly work, little of it is devoted to field education itself. She concludes with these insightful questions: “If professional education regarding ministerial practice is the central mission of theological education, why, then, are directors of programming that is inherently central to this endeavor not publishing their work, not engaging in substantial amounts of research, and demonstrating high positional turnover? Given the centrality of this work in professional education for ministry, as originally raised by Niebuhr et al, and more recently by Rebecca Chopp, why does it appear so ambiguous and tentative in nature? What is the level of professional and institutional commitment by and to these personnel and/or to their positions?”<sup>4</sup> McDaniel notes that the high rate of turnover among field educators may indicate a low level of institutional commitment by and to field educators. This in turn, she suggests, might influence the propensity of field educators to engage in research into their own fields.

A 1996 volume of *Theological Education* also carries an article by Donald Beisswenger, a leading field educator. In that article, he presents research into what field educators identify as their goals and purposes.<sup>5</sup> These two issues of *Theological Education* represent the bulk of publishing by field educators about TFE since 1995.

Another venue for writings by field educators about TFE is the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*. However, the most recent articles in that journal by leading field educators are in the 1996 volume, which has articles by Jeffrey Mahan and Jean Stairs.<sup>6</sup> Their articles explore problematic issues about supervision within field education.<sup>7</sup>

This brief summary of the current publications by field educators points to the restricted range of scholarship within TFE. To some extent, this limited array may relate to the fact that there have been just a few venues for publication. One of the major journals focuses on concerns related to supervision and training, so there has been a natural emphasis on supervision in the writings TFE's interests. The focus of the ATS publication, naturally, is on the intersections between the specific work of TFE and theological education. Another vehicle, the *Key Resources*, no longer exists but did function at one time to encourage a much wider range of scholarly interests within the TFE community.<sup>8</sup> We are left to wonder what would stimulate scholarly dialog about and critique of the significant pedagogical contributions of theological field education.

The limited amount and scope of scholarly work has left unaddressed many areas of crucial importance. First, there has been little by way of descriptive documentation of TFE.<sup>9</sup> At present, it is quite difficult to locate information on how even the most basic issues within TFE are handled.<sup>10</sup> Recent scholarship has not done systematic analyses of a wide range concerns within TFE. Issues such as how credit is determined, the standards for training supervisors, and principles for those who teach reflective seminars would be just a few examples of issues that have not yet been studied in recent scholarship. Instead, scholarship has been largely anecdotal, describing the particular points of view of authors, but not compiling and comparing varying points of view between practitioners of field education.

TFE might benefit from developing a body of work that enables comparison between contrasting values and assumptions about what schools expect and hope for from their students' engagements in field education. Such work would need to construct ways

of comparing programs and assumptions. The purpose of such construction would be to show that there are basic categories, basic genres, which can take various shapes in a range of contexts, with contrasting results. This construction of ways to compare programs would surface similarities as well as clarify fundamental differences of values, intentions, and approaches.

The reasons for the current vacuum of comparative studies cannot be ascertained. One could conjecture, however, that it may relate to the emerging maturity of TFE. In order to do comparative studies, a field must not assume that there is one approach to a given problem, but instead must envision pluralities of possibilities, values, and needs. Comparative studies, therefore, emerge from cultures where diversity is valued. It may be that TFE is maturing as a field in a way that will support a wider appreciation of the need for differences in approaches and purposes.

Currently, much of the study within TFE focuses on individual educational elements within any TFE program. Articles explore how to handle problems in supervisory relationships, ways to use cases to teach theological reflection, and what is the role of the field educator in relation to the rest of the faculty at a theological school. These examples show that scholarly work within TFE has been limited to just a few areas of concern and has not yet branched into comparative study.

#### Texts about TFE

In addition to these journal articles, there has been a small number of significant monographs produced by or for field educators. These texts serve primarily as resources for use within TFE. They do not describe or analyze TFE. *The Art of Theological Reflection* by Patricia O'Connell Killen and John de Beer is widely used within TFE to

teach students how to reflect theologically.<sup>11</sup> It explores one of the central tasks of TFE, theological reflection, but does not describe the actual programs that employ the various strategies they illuminate. Thus it is a text with relevance and value for field education, without being a text that specifically researches TFE.

Other texts similarly serve as resources for TFE. *Shared Wisdom: A Guide to Case Study Reflection in Ministry* details how to explore ministry incidents and issues by using case studies.<sup>12</sup> It is co-authored by a group of field educators. Many field educators surveyed for this project reported that they use this text.

Another frequently used text is *Method in Ministry*.<sup>13</sup> This text, like the two previously discussed, aims to develop the capacity to be critically and theologically reflective about one's experiences as a leader in ministry. As such, it is a resource but it does not specifically address how the resource might be best utilized within a theological school.

These types of texts might prove to be even more useful resources when they can be part of a broader-based perspective that compares approaches and show the ways differing approaches are associated with various values and aims. The strengths and limitations of current publications about and for TFE are evident in the fact that we have strong resources about theological reflection, but no descriptions or comparison of ways that specific programs inculcate such practices. There is less developed dialog about what the actual work should involve, and what might be its purposes. There is an implied or tacit assumption that all TFE programs should have a singular approach in this lack of comparison of practices and purposes. Such an assumption stands in contrast to the

field's other fundamental assumption that context does and should have significant influence on ministerial practices.

This review of recent publications within TFE shows that TFE has not usually looked at how the design of the educational experience will affect the way leaders are formed. The composition of programs has not received the same amount of scholarly inquiry as have its individual components. In contrast to previous areas of scrutiny, this project focuses attention on the importance of educational models for TFE. The project thus promotes another type of scholarly pursuit within TFE.

The next sections move on from the literature of TFE and survey the related literatures. The survey moves through adult education to adult development. It then surveys leadership education literature, and closes with reference to theological education literature. These literatures, as has been explained above, work together to provide theoretical tools for the remainder of this study.

### Adult Education Literature in Relation to TFE

#### Basic Types of Educational Approaches Within TFE

In order to review the literature of adult education in relation to TFE, it is first necessary to describe the educational approaches within TFE for which this literature will be most useful. Since there are several education approaches within TFE, I will first describe these and then hone in on the type of educational approach, transformational, that will receive the greatest scrutiny within this review.

Each TFE program includes several types of learning that can be grouped into three basic purposes of education.<sup>14</sup> In the first educational approach, the major goal is to

impart information. In this type of education, the teacher conveys data to the students. For example, students need to learn that state laws dictate what ministers can and cannot do under certain circumstances.

The second major educational purpose is to develop skills.<sup>15</sup> Students develop specific skills such as preaching, in order to do ministry. Preaching, like any other skill, has a number of elements that must be mastered. For example, students learn how to modulate their voices, to handle a sermon manuscript, to communicate key ideas with a logical flow to the argument. These are examples of skills that are taught and reinforced within the context of TFE. The acquisition of skills differs from the type of education that focuses on learning facts. Yet this educational goal, like that of assimilating information, also involves integrative work.<sup>16</sup>

The most significantly integrative work, however, occurs in the third major educational purpose within TFE. In this type of education, the purpose is to alter students' perspectives. In this type of education, students bring together their identities, their capacities and curiosities with their ministry experiences. Experiences inform identity, and the individual's emerging abilities help shape their experiences.

Every TFE program includes some skill-building, as well as some didactic teaching that conveys important information, yet most would agree that the third, transformational, is the major purpose of TFE. In the next section, I explore why most of TFE can be understood as transformational. I explore the many types of shifts in understanding that are expected of M.Div. students, and the heavy weight placed on field education to support such development. I begin by showing the roots of transformative education theory in the writings of John Dewey.

### Transformative Education Within TFE

#### Dewey Understands Developing Reflective Capacities to Be a Central Goal of Education

Transformative learning is rooted in concepts first developed by John Dewey. Dewey explores the ways inquiry into experience influences learning. Dewey shows how reflection on experience is educational because of the way reflection produces new habits of mind. Dewey's insights are foundational to subsequent work among adult educators with regard to teaching students to reflect upon experience.

For Dewey, education should do more than to confer information upon students. Instead, in Dewey's conception, education should nurture future growth. His general philosophy of education centered on the understanding that the interaction between pupil and teacher should foster the transformation of the student's thought processes toward more reflective habits: "...development (and) growth involve change...and modification in definite directions." Dewey inveighs against teaching that undermines such transformation: "It is quite possible for a teacher, under the supposed sanction of the idea of cultivating individuality, to fixate a pupil more or less at his existing level." Instead, Dewey advises that teachers should promote each pupil's unique development: "Respect for individuality is primarily *intellectual*. It signifies studying the individual to see what is there to work with. Having this sympathetic understanding, the *practical* work then begins, for the practical work is one of modification, of changing, of reconstruction continued without end. The change must at least be towards more effective techniques, towards greater self-reliance, towards a more thoughtful and inquiring disposition, one more capable of persistent effort in meeting obstacles." For Dewey, the work of the

teacher in relation to each pupil should be to challenge the student's individual capacity for reconstructing understanding, always in relation to experience.<sup>17</sup>

#### Dewey Explores How Teachers Cultivate Habits of Inquiry in Students

Dewey shows, in much of his writing about education, the ways in which teachers should pursue the primary task of cultivating habits of inquiry in their students. He points to the central importance of respecting the initiative and individuality of the students. But he does not hesitate, as the above passage makes clear, to assert that teachers should challenge students to move toward new levels of self-understanding, new levels of inquiry into their experiences. The teacher is not passive, but engages the student in processes that will move the student beyond his or her present capacities for reflection on experience. Thus Dewey's educational philosophy gives an historic and clear basis for education that aims to transform student perspectives.

#### Dewey's Writings on Teacher Training Have Relevance to Ministerial Preparation

Dewey's writings also touch on the training of teachers, in ways that have direct relevance for TFE's aim of preparing ministers. In an essay about teaching teachers how to teach, he argues that new teachers face a peril that can stunt their growth as educators. This danger arises when they are put into situations where they must too quickly demonstrate their ability to manage a classroom. For under such conditions, they fail to fully develop their capacities to foster a spirit of inquiry in their classrooms. He sums up his concerns: "immediate skill may be got at the cost of power to go on growing."<sup>18</sup>

Using Dewey's insights, one might question whether TFE ought to aim to enable students to demonstrate their competence in order that judicatories can confidently place them into positions of authority. Dewey suggests that such demonstrations, while they

might appear to display competence, instead undermine the very transformative processes that eventually do produce professionals who engage in the kind of learning that is the source of ongoing vitality.

### Education as a Continuing Reconstruction of Experience

If TFE is not to just set up students to attain and demonstrate competence, then what other goals might be appropriate? In his pedagogical creed, Dewey states: “education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience.”<sup>19</sup> He suggests that true education involves the training of thought: “the problem of method in forming habits of reflective thought is the problem of establishing conditions that will arouse and guide curiosity; of setting up the connections in things experienced that will on later occasions promote the flow of suggestions, create problems and purposes that will favor consecutiveness in the succession of ideas.”<sup>20</sup> Dewey’s philosophy that education is a process of engendering and training for reflective thought provides a foundation for subsequent explorations into how education is transformative.

The question TFE faces today relates directly to Dewey’s assertions about the centrality of developing reflective habits. Dewey identified the way when teachers aim to demonstrate professional competence too early; they can undermine the formation of reflective thought patterns. Dewey asserts that education, at its finest, involves the kinds of interactions between pupils and students that engender transformed understandings based in the individuality of the students. TFE supports this kind of development in students by connecting them with mentors who can individualize their learning. TFE also engages students in reflective work that shifts their fundamental assumptions and understandings about themselves and the world around them. Dewey’s concerns suggest

ways TFE might want to further consider how best to engender, and not undermine the formation of reflective habits.

Over the half-century since Dewey wrote about education, adult educators have wrestled with what it means to reconstruct the meaning of experience. Further, they have wrestled with how education enables students to find new ways of constructing meaning from experiences. These new ways, adult educators assert, require fundamental, or transformative learning processes. Developing ways that enable students to make such changes lies at the heart of transformational education.

### Jack Mezirow and Transformative Education

#### Frames of Reference

Jack Mezirow is a more recent author of adult education who, in the tradition of Dewey, explores the terrain of transformative learning based in experience. He defines transformative learning by using a crucial concept: “(transformative learning is) the of effecting change in a *frame of reference*” Mezirow explains: “adults have acquired a coherent body of experience...frames of reference that define their life world (and) are the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences. They selectively shape...perceptions, cognition and feelings...When circumstances permit, transformative learners move toward a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience.”<sup>21</sup>

Jack Mezirow explains how learners develop new ways of seeing themselves and of interpreting situations: “We transform our frames of reference through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind

or points of view are based...Self-reflection can lead to significant personal transformations.”<sup>22</sup>

### Cranton and Transformative Professional Education

Patricia Cranton builds on the ways Mezirow's work lays a foundation for transformative educational theory. Cranton applies Mezirow's concepts of transformative learning to the professional formation that teachers must go through in a way that models how TFE might also apply concepts from transformative education theory.

Cranton begins by summarizing Mezirow's transformative education theory: “we make meaning of the world through our experiences.” She then illuminates the crucial concept of habits of mind: “we develop habits of mind or a frame of reference for understanding the world, much of which is uncritically assimilated.” This much describes the natural process everyone goes through just by the nature of daily living. Transformative education enables learners to intentionally develop new habits of mind that do not naturally evolve just from experience: “transformative learning takes place when (experience and reflection on it) lead us to open up our frame of reference, discard a habit of mind, see alternatives, and thereby act differently in the world.” Cranton then concludes with a summary of how teachers in formation develop new habits of mind: “When educators are led to examine their practice critically and thereby acquire alternative ways of understanding what they do, transformative learning about teaching takes place.”<sup>23</sup>

Cranton's purpose is to inform teacher education about the relevance of transformative learning theory. However, much of her writing could be applied directly to the professional formation of ministerial leaders. For example, she writes: "Effective professional development (of teachers) brings our habits of mind about teaching into consciousness and allows us to examine critically what we believe and value in our work as educators. The goal is to open up alternatives, introduce new ways of thinking about teaching--a goal that is potentially transformative." One could substitute "ministerial leaders" for "teachers" in this quote and arrive at a goal shared by many field educators.<sup>24</sup>

Cranton suggests that the way to develop the new habits of mind needed by teachers is to "incorporate activities that foster content process and premise reflection." This phrase, "premise reflection," is not currently in wide use within TFE. Yet it might prove a useful term to describe the breadth and type of reflection, albeit theological as well, that TFE seeks to engender.<sup>25</sup>

Cranton specifies the distinctions, originally drawn by Mezirow, between content, process and premise reflection: "Content reflection is the examination of the content or description of a problem." This she contrasts with process reflection, which "involves checking on the problem-solving strategies we are using." Finally, she points to premise reflection, which, she states, "is the questioning of the problem itself."<sup>26</sup>

Cranton summarizes the usefulness of transformative learning theory to adult education professional formation: "if we view professional development as an opportunity to cultivate transformative learning it gives us a new perspective on our goals, what we do in our practice, and how we think about our work...Rather than

teaching and learning as usual, they can begin to look at their habits of mind and work with new questions, insight, and promise.”<sup>27</sup>

### TFE Is Transformative Education

Using the concepts developed by Mezirow and Cranton, we can describe the ways in which TFE is transformative. As Cranton says, professional education lifts up new questions, so that professionals can develop new habits of mind. This next section will explore with some specificity just how certain aspects of TFE can properly be considered as transformative.

TFE is transformative because it calls for students to shift their self-understandings. In order to do so, students must learn how to identify their guiding assumptions and then they must learn how to reflect on their frames of reference. This type of reflection requires a change in self-perception in which students may deepen their self-understanding. The types of experiential learning they are undergoing in TFE, however, often do more than deepen understanding. They require students to move from one type of understanding of their role and purpose to another kind of insight. Students often develop new ways of receiving and processing information about how one does and should function in a given situation.

### Illustrations of How TFE Is Transformative Education

An illustration may help the reader understand how transformation is a primary educational outcome within TFE. As a part of their field education assignments, students may learn the skill of projection in public speaking. Their mentors may teach them this skill of speaking clearly in a large room. A student who acquires this new skill of

projection may not find the skill itself to be transformative. However, the student may undergo a transformative experience when the student preaches effectively, and then notices someone who is in the back row is weeping uncontrollably, apparently in response to what the student has said in the sermon.

The student's transformation relates to the fact that the student in such a situation must decide how or even if to react to such a response to their public leadership. Ordinarily, one spends quite a bit of time responding to someone who cries when we speak. However, in a very large and impersonal setting, it may not be wise or even feasible for the student to respond in this ordinary way. The student acquires the skills of projecting the voice relatively easily, but the student will need to develop a whole new self-understanding to accommodate the reactions to a newly magnified vocal ability. This example shows that students develop a new sense of self when they must learn how to accommodate the literal and figurative distance between them and their hearers.

Students in internships are thrust into a multitude of such jarring experiences. They must do more than employ skills of counseling, preaching, and praying. They need a place to reflect on what is changing inside them as they encounter a whole new quantity as well as quality of demands for their interaction and response. They need to reflect on what they have assumed they would and should do in response, and what each new situation evokes from them.

#### Transformative Learning for Leaders: From Participants to Directors

A few students enter the M.Div. program with established identities as public leaders. A minority of students might have served as lawyers, teachers, or as pastors who already are ordained. However, most students enter the M.Div. program with primarily

private identities, because they have mainly been in roles of participants and observers. The shift that will be required of these students, if they are to become public leaders in pastoral or other ministerial roles can be described as moving from participant to director.<sup>28</sup> Students move from responsive acting or reacting toward coordinating and interpreting the actions of others (along with their own).

This shift, from a role of participant or observer, to director, requires that students develop new perspectives on action. It is one thing to tend the sails in a large boat, but it is quite another to take responsibility for the direction of the boat. One must learn to notice many more details, how to motivate others, how to check one's own behaviors, and many other new life skills. The level of integration these new skills requires is more complex. Leaders need to know how to coordinate decision-making processes, which is quite different from being an active participant in a decision-making process that someone else facilitates.

Students move from actor toward director as they encounter the demands that accompany public ministerial leadership. Ministerial leaders learn to take responsibility for public perceptions of their functioning, as well as how to coordinate effective communication processes about those perceptions. In contrast, a person in private life would not necessarily have to wrestle with how the perceptions of others affect their functioning.

Student interns often encounter new ways of relating to others around how they are perceived. For example, an intern student who announces from the pulpit that she endorses a particular political stance might create an impression that church members must agree with that stance in order to continue their membership. The student may or

may not have such an intention. However, once members develop such a perception, it will become quite difficult for that student to interact with persons of opposing views without their becoming defensive. The student may not understand their defensiveness, particularly if she did not intend to communicate that everyone should necessarily agree with her opinions.

What the pastor is communicating when stating her particular political stance is significantly different not just in magnitude but also in impact than if she were to make similar statements as a private person. The pastoral role, and the place of the pulpit in the life of a congregation shift the content of her message. She needs to develop awareness of these complex realities so that she can communicate more effectively. She must develop a new framework to account for the complex ramifications of actions.

Transformative learning theory, with its emphasis on reflecting on frames of reference, gives tools for understanding how students learn to lead through such experiences. TFE students frequently have opportunities to learn in just these types of situations. They say things that are technically identical to things they have said before, but the meaning and responses are quite different. They find themselves confused about what is wrong with the people around them. This when the teacher can draw attention to the student's frames of reference in order to help them develop new interpretive tools. Transformative educational theory helps explain how students understand their newly acquired public roles and the attending implications.

#### Transformational Learning in Relation to Developing New Communication Skills

Students undergo other types of transformations in their perspectives. Students who enter the M.Div. program often have listening skills that enable them to respond to

others. Pastoral care courses sometimes will work to develop more nuanced listening skills through role-playing or other activities. They might learn, for example, how to rephrase content while listening, how to name underlying feelings, etc. They may learn to limit their questioning of others, and how to allow the other person to gradually open up to share more. These are skills of active listening that can be taught within a classroom environment. However, few pastoral care courses have the luxury of time and small class size that would enable students to focus on what happens to personal identities when they shift to new listening styles.

The TFE student, however, often has opportunities to reflect on the shift in personal identity that can accompany the employment of new communication skills. The student who is used to responding to others, jumping in to solve issues, pointing out problems or giving advice, may develop a new identity when these strategies are replaced by active listening. A student, for example, who listens to a battered spouse without leaping in to solve her problems, may leave the encounter particularly disturbed. He may need assistance in knowing how such a conversation is truly pastoral, and how it is helpful. He may come to know himself in entirely new ways, and he may have to transform his perspectives on abuse, solving problems, and faithful action along the way.

In other words, it is not enough to equip students with new skills, no matter how crucially important those skills may be. This is because employing those skills often provokes deeper shifts in self-understandings, and in how the student perceives the world of faithful action. Students need learning environments hospitable to wrestling with questions such as: “what good does it do to listen without solving the terrible problems people live with--does this mean I am an ineffective pastor?” Students need to be able to

explore why their newly acquired skills place them into existential and faith dilemmas.

The frame of reference concept suggests that these students move from a self-understanding based in problem-solving to a new frame based in being present.

### Transformed Understandings of Leadership Stances

Students undergo a number of types of transformation when they move into public leadership roles. One important shift is to move from problem-solving to guiding others as they wrestle with their own problems. Ronald Heifetz names the importance of leading groups through adaptive challenges in his *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. He names this “mobilizing adaptive work.” Heifetz contrasts adaptive challenges with technical problems. The former have no obvious solutions, and sometimes are not even clearly defined as problems. Technical problems, in contrast, have solutions. Leaders, Heifetz asserts, must learn to “(shift) away from answer-giving authority toward the use of...authority to construct a relationship in which to raise and process tough questions.”<sup>29</sup>

Although there are specific leadership skills that must be learned to mobilize adaptive work, perhaps the most difficult aspect of such leadership is the demanding reality that the leader in such a role is rarely understood or appreciated. At a recent gathering of field educators, Dudley Rose pointed out that teaching students to lead adaptive work also entails supporting them as they adjust to the difficult realities of receiving what sounds like negative evaluation of their work while they are doing precisely what needs to be done:

One of the things that can happen to students who follow some of Heifetz’s advice about leadership without easy answers is that they are susceptible to the charge that they are failures as leaders...to me one of the interesting questions in training and assessment is the way the usual measures, at least early on in this process, are very difficult to use.

Because, by the usual measures, often the (effective) leader is determined by the critics to be a failure. ...There has to be a built-in safety valve, so that the leader cannot just tell people to follow them because they say so, and we want students to learn to hear their critics. The question is how to learn from the critics, so that I can know that the losses they are experiencing are significant, etc. But it still may mean that I need to lead in ways that do not look to others as if I am doing a good job. To me, that is a very hard thing to put measures to, and I also think it is a hard thing to know how to educate people for.<sup>30</sup>

It is especially tricky for students to learn the difference between resistance to leadership that does not provide easy answers, and feedback that they actually are taking a problematic approach.

In order for students to make such distinctions between feedback that indicates failure and feedback that indicates they are engaging helpfully as leaders, some students need to confront their frame of reference that says their personal value is based in receiving blessing and adulation toward a new basis for self-esteem. Students need learning environments where they can process their disappointments, and be confronted if they are not hearing feedback accurately. They need learning environments that go beyond simply reinforcing their impressions and instead help them to develop more nuanced understandings of the many layers through which people communicate how they are processing challenging circumstances.

#### James E. Loder and Transformative Learning

The above examples explore issues of understanding one's role, communication patterns, and orientations toward problem-solving as a leader. We must turn to another author, James E. Loder, to identify the ways in which TFE experiences sometimes transform something even more fundamental in students: their souls. Loder speaks of transformation as something fundamental that occurs because of the involvement of God

in the educational process: “the convicted person believes that the very nature of one’s being is changed by the Convictor through the transforming event.”<sup>31</sup> Loder goes beyond speaking of transformation in terms of some organized, intentional educational process. Instead, he looks at what he calls “the fourfold knowing event”. He addresses four dimensions of being human: “environment (also referred to as ‘the lived world’), selfhood, the possibility of not being, and the possibility of new being.” Loder explores how, in the transformational knowing event, the self, or “the knower” both is embodied in the world and “at the same time stands outside it.”<sup>32</sup> One makes sense of one’s experience by transcending the world, and also by making reference to the possibilities of annihilation (not being) and becoming new.

Loder’s language brings new spiritually and psychologically based concepts to the student experience within TFE. We miss the point if we speak only of how students are developing fuller understandings of their roles as leaders, as well as the degree of their influence and responsibility. Loder points to the more complex, more spiritual dimension of the types of transformations that many students experience as a result of the existential and leadership dilemmas created when they are immersed in internship situations.

Loder gives language, for example, to the reality that learning experiences, no matter how compelling, are not the only frame of reference for the spiritually-based learner. “Our social, cultural, and natural ‘worlds,’ of course, have considerable power to reflect back and compose us. Yet they cannot captivate us altogether.”<sup>33</sup> Loder points to the larger, spiritual reality to which TFE students must learn to attend as they develop entirely new ways of interpreting their experiences and their own purposes.

These examples show the importance of transformative education in preparing leaders to face what congregations expect or need. Students need to process surprising emotional responses they and others experience to their actions. They need to confront how their own assumptions bind their abilities to see and hear accurately. Students need a deep level of appreciation of how they compose their sense of self. They need tools for how to understand themselves in reference: God, their own achievements, their environments, their senses of annihilation or nihilism, as well as their hopes for becoming someone new. They need to confront how employing new skills does more than build their competence; it also may shift their identities and develop their souls. They need to move from a self-understanding that is based in individuality toward one that is based in mobilizing the community for faithful actions.

#### Transformation for Action

One more major shift that students in TFE undergo bears scrutiny. This is the ways students develop new ways of planning their time and actions. Ministerial leaders are most effective when they are able to mobilize groups for strategic planning.<sup>34</sup> This means that they need to learn these skills. However, mobilizing a group for such planning involves more than specific exercises. It also requires the leader to shift to a different kind of time orientation in action and planning.

One might ask where do students learn to shift their time orientation? Is this addressed in any explicit way? It may or may not be addressed in many TFE programs, but they would certainly be the best equipped to do so. It may be that mentors are most effective in shifting student time orientations. I have heard many students report their astonishment at how their mentor did not force through a conclusion on an issue during a

church council meeting that the student knew the mentor felt strongly about. They then ask the mentor why they did not raise the issue, and the mentor might reply something like “the time is not right for that one yet.” The student glimpses another way of conceptualizing a rate of change.

### Conclusion: Much of What Happens in TFE Is Transformative Learning

I have named a number of ways that ministerial leaders must shift the types of orientations they bring from their largely private and individual experiences. These include a shift in time orientation, a shift in leading change and tolerating disappointments in others, a move from being a responder to being an initiator, and a development of a new way of taking responsibility for communication and perception-creation. These are all fundamental transformations for most students. It would not be possible, or advisable, for TFE to take on responsibility for these shifts. It may not even be possible for an entire M.Div. degree to mobilize such adaptive transformations. However, TFE is equipped in some unique ways to support students as they begin to enter into this complicated and extensive arena of personal transformation.

TFE supports students as they undergo transformation primarily by the ways it engages students in reflection on action. TFE engages students in reflection in three main ways. First, the students reflect with their mentors. Mentors are experts on the shift from private individual to public leader. They model how to take responsibility for communication processes, and how to interpret perceptions. Mentors also may expertly model how to mobilize for adaptive change (though many mentors probably also model a view of leader as problem solver).

TFE uses a number of educational tools to help students begin to interpret the confusion that arises in these types of situations. Reflective practica, for example, give students opportunities to tell their stories to each other. Frequently, another student will point out that the effect of another student's actions carries implications that student simply could not yet see. Similarly, mentors can guide students to make such discoveries when they are meeting together reflecting back on the week's events.

TFE also supports students undergoing transformation through the way reflective practica enable students to step out of the immediacy of action for reflection on that action. Students who engage in regular group reflection gain two important types of perspective. First, others may confront them within the group on the limits of their perceptions of a situation. This multiplies their perspectives. Secondly, the students begin to function as leaders who are, as Heifetz puts it "on the balcony". Heifetz suggests that leaders must learn how to metaphorically leave the dance, in their minds, to stand on the balcony and survey the entire dance floor.<sup>35</sup> By placing actions into a theoretical realm the students learn that they can stand outside of action to reflect on it. Leaders who only live within the moment must develop a capacity to shift to a position of examining what is happening from outside.

Mentors and reflective practica are educational processes that support student transformation. To some extent, the entire M.Div. curriculum may also support such transformation. There are many locations within the M.Div. curriculum that generate habits of interpretation. For example, the biblical studies department teaches exegesis. This moves students from instinctual interpretation of scripture to disciplined reflection

on scripture. This is the very type of shift that is required in the move from private expression to public communication.

The previous section has detailed a number of the transformations ministerial settings demand of their leaders. It has briefly summarized several ways TFE can support these types of transformations. In some cases, TFE is already working in a way that is deeply informed by these educational theories. In other areas, TFE might benefit from the wisdom of educational theorists in order to build new ways of supporting transformative education.

## Notes

### Notes

#### Chapter 1

1 Theological schools that are members of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) have been the focus of this study, including thirty schools within the United States of North America. It includes just one program from outside the United States, in Canada. In some cases, these are called seminaries, in others, divinity schools, and in still others theological schools. I use the terms somewhat interchangeably in this report, unless referring to a specific school. There are, however, important differences between schools that offer advanced degrees such as the Ph.D. and those that do not. Likewise, there are differences between schools that are attached to larger universities (these are often called divinity schools) and those that stand alone. Another important distinction is between schools that are affiliated with a particular denomination and those that are not. Finally, some schools are very small while others host thousands of students. Later in the report, when I describe particular schools, I make note of these differences. When speaking in general about theological schools, however, it still is important to keep in mind that in some ways there is no generic theological school.

2 *San Francisco Theological Seminary Catalog* (San Anselmo, CA: San Francisco Theological Seminary, 2000-2002), 11. This catalog describes their goal as preparing “leaders for the church of Jesus Christ sent by the Holy Spirit in God’s mission to the world.” The catalog continues with this description of what its graduates will do: “serve in congregations, the wider church, the classroom, and the public sphere.” Not all theological schools use the term preparation of leaders to signify the purpose of their educational enterprise. *Wartburg Theological Seminary Catalog* (Dubuque, IA: Wartburg Theological Seminary, 2000-2002), 2. In this catalog, for example, the stated mission is “to proclaim and interpret the gospel of Jesus Christ to a world created for communion with God and in need of personal and social healing.” Harvard Divinity School, <http://www.hds.harvard.edu> (accessed April 29, 2004). Harvard Divinity School states that its purpose is “to educate women and men for service as leaders in religious life and thought—as ministers and teachers, and in other professions enriched by theological study.”

3 It is important to note that there is a wide consensus that schools prepare students for more roles than just congregational pastors. In this study I frequently cite congregational ministry as a goal of theological education. Such a goal, however, seriously understates the actual use of theological study and the types of leadership positions graduates fill.

4 Robert Wuthnow, *The Crisis in the Churches: Spiritual Malaise, Fiscal Woe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3. Robert Wuthnow described a dire situation of the 1990s. “America’s churches have fallen on hard times. A few years ago, new congregations were being established in record numbers, new facilities were being built in every new suburban development, and more clergy were being trained and hired than at any time in our nation’s history. But the economic prosperity that once characterized American religious institutions is now a thing of the past. Financial woes are the order of the day. Many smaller congregations are struggling to avoid having to close their doors. Many of the larger churches have had to scale back programs and put plans for expansion on indefinite hold.” Wuthnow’s description of woes preceded the current difficult situation in the Roman Catholic Church of North America, owing to the recent clergy sexual abuse cases. Protestant and Roman Catholic communities share the same condition: spiritual malaise and fiscal woe.

## Notes

### Chapter 2

- 1 Anselm L. Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Newbury Park CA: Sage Publications, 1990), 23.
- 2 Strauss and Corbin, 23.
- 3 Strauss and Corbin, 23.
- 4 Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theor: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1967).
- 5 Barney G. Glaser, Theoretical Sensitivity Series in Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory (Mill Valley: Sociology Press, 1978), 6ff.
- 6 Glaser and Strauss, 1.
- 7 Marie E. Peine, "Doing Grounded Theory Research with Gifted Students," *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* 26, no. 3 (2003): 184-200. Researchers are finding grounded theory an increasingly useful approach. Recent journal articles demonstrate how researchers currently are using grounded theory to illuminate participants' experiences. For example, Peine explores the value of doing grounded theory with gifted students. In this article, Peine uses the grounded theory approach because it supports "research about the classroom from the perspective of the student." The author uses grounded theory because it enables her to paint a picture of how gifted students deal with the reality that they already know most of the material that is covered in any given year. Peine uses grounded theory because it develops theory from what she observes of students, and what she records from student voices.
- 8 Joanna H. Bell and Rachel D. Bromnick, "The Social Reality of The Imaginary Audience: A Grounded Theory Approach," *Adolescence* 38, no. 150 (Summer 2003): 207-19. This article uses grounded research to capture adolescent experience as accurately as possible. Bell and Bromnick explore what adolescents actually report they worry about, and why. The purpose of Bell and Bromnick's study is to check out a longstanding assumption that adolescents base their worries on egocentric perceptions that are not adequately connected to real evaluations and consequences. Bell and Bromnick explain the value of grounded theory in pursuing their goal of illuminating adolescent experience: "the use of grounded theory in this research has brought the 'imaginary audience' and the concerns that adolescents have about 'what other people think' back into focus, and has highlighted many of the ways in which these concerns are phenomenologically evidenced in the 'real lives' of young people" (215). For the purposes of my use of grounded theory in this study, the last phrase is most significant. The use of grounded theory allows me to pay attention to what is phenomenologically evidenced in field education programs.
- 9 Glaser, 55.
- 10 Glaser, 57.
- 11 Glaser, 57.
- 12 Glaser, 57.
- 13 Glaser, 58.
- 14 Glaser, 4.
- 15 Glaser, 4.
- 16 Paule McNicoll, "Issues in Teaching Participatory Action Research," *Journal of Social Work Education* 35, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 51-62.
- 17 McNicoll, "Issues," 51-62.
- 18 Kalay Mordock and Marianne E. Krasny, "PAR: A Theoretical and Practical Framework for Environmental Education," *Journal of Environmental Education* 32, no. 3 (2001): 15-20.
- 19 Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., introduction to *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 26. Denzin and Lincoln explain the

significance and implications of situations when a researcher is closely identified with the research subjects. Even when the researcher is not, however, closely identified with the research subjects, they point out that the myth of the objectivity of any researcher has been dispelled. Instead of striving for a disinterested or detached stance, the researcher now must instead understand the lenses through which they see subjects, and how that influences their capacity to observe and describe phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln particularly note, in their introduction to this edited volume on qualitative research, that the field now recognizes that “all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied...each interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher, including the questions that are asked and the interpretations that are brought to them.”

20 Sharan B. Merriam and Rosemary S. Caffarella, *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999).

21 At the Boston ATFE 26th biennial, in January of 2001, I interviewed Dudley Rose of Harvard Divinity School, Mick Smith of Christian Theological Seminary, Paul Stevens of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mark Fowler of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Tom Thomas of Asbury Theological Seminary, and Randy Nelson of Luther Seminary. At the Chicago ATFE 27th biennial, in January of 2003, I interviewed Cynthia Lindner of the University of Chicago Divinity School, Matt Floding of Western Theological Seminary, William Kondrath of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, and Bruce Stanley of Duke University Divinity School. These interviews were taped and selectively transcribed.

22 Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey, “Interviewing: The Art of Science,” in *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 47-78 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998). Fontana and Frey distinguish between structured and unstructured interviews this way: “the former aims at capturing precise data of a doable nature in order to explain behavior within preestablished [*sic*] categories, whereas the latter is used in an attempt to understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing an a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry” (56).

23 At Wesley Theological Seminary, I also interviewed a supervisor. Lewis Parks was a new administrator whose position focused on establishing relationships with the United Methodist Conferences in the area of Wesley Seminary.

24 While I was visiting Union Theological Seminary, I also visited Auburn Theological Seminary, because of its proximity. There I inquired into the existing research into field education programs, and discovered that at that time the Auburn Theological Seminary, which is primarily a research institute, did not have existing research projects into field education as part of its focus.

25 Unlike these other initial interviews, my interview with Dr. Jordan did not take place on the seminary campus, but it was an in-person interview.

26 Interestingly, the seminar was taught in a combination of Portuguese and Spanish, since there were so many area ministers who spoke these languages. (I speak Spanish and so was able to generally follow the content of the seminar.) The session was led by Lilliana Da Valle, a D.Min. student and pastor.

27 This work was being done by Robert T. O’Gorman of the Loyola Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago and Kathy Talvacchia of Union Theological Seminary.

28 The meeting took place at the Courtyard by Marriott in Chicago, Illinois on October 27-29, 2000.

29 The participants were: Sue Zabel, Wesley Theological Seminary; Michael Greene, Trinity Evangelical Seminary; Jeffrey Mahan, Iliff School of Theology; Kathy Talvacchia, Union Theological Seminary; Lynn Rhodes, Pacific School of Religion; Scott Cormode, Claremont School of Theology (Scott teaches leadership, administration and finance and attended partly as the administrator of the grant that supported this and the other regional meetings); and Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology.

<sup>30</sup> Jack Mezirow, “Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice,” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 74 (Summer 1997): 5-12. One example of Jack Mezirow’s direct relevance to some of TFE’s concerns is the following quote from this article: “A frame of reference encompasses cognitive, conative, and emotional components, and is composed of two dimensions: habits of mind and a point of view. Habits of mind are broad, abstract, orienting, habitual ways of thinking feeling, and acting

influenced by assumptions that constitute a set of codes.” Mezirow here is referencing a key concern of TFE, which is to address how students develop habits of mind in reference to their ministerial identity, functioning, theological articulation, and actions. Since Mezirow’s theories of adult education center on how adults develop and shift these fundamental mental models that guide their assumptions and actions, I wanted to see if these other field educators were already referencing his work in what they were doing and researching about TFE. Jack Mezirow and associates, *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1990), 1. This is another work that contains many resources for the very type of work TFE does, particularly in the practicum arena. For example, he begins this volume with an introductory chapter that has as its first sentence: “To make meaning means to make sense of an experience; we make an interpretation of it.” One of TFE’s core values is to enable student to make sense of their ministerial experiences.

31 See Appendix A for a copy of the entire survey.

32 See Appendix B for the list of participants.

33 Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, *The Fact Book on Theological Education* (Vandalia, OH: Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, 2002-2003). There are 244 ATS accredited schools.

34 ATS, *Fact Book*. These are: Fuller Theological Seminary, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, Ashland Theological Seminary, and Concordia Seminary (St. Louis).

35 Here I am referring to the total full time equivalent (FTE) as listed in the ATS, *Fact Book*. These are different from the FTE for the M.Div. programs.

36 There were six United Methodist schools, and three Presbyterian (USA) schools. The United Methodist schools are: Wesley Theological Seminary, Perkins School of Theology, Garrett-Evangelical Theological School, Boston University School of Theology, Iliff School of Theology, and Duke University Divinity School. The PC(USA) related seminaries are San Francisco Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and McCormick Theological Seminary.

37 ATS, *Fact Book*. These are: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Carey Theological College, and Denver Seminary. The other inter-denominational seminaries participating are: Union Theological Seminary, Pacific School of Religion, and Harvard Divinity School. The University of Chicago Divinity School lists itself as nondenominational.

38 An even more important critique would be that there was under-representation from the diocesan Roman Catholic institutions. Only the Dominican House of Studies prepares diocesan priests, while Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry and Institute for Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago prepare pastoral leaders, but not diocesan priests.

39 See Appendix C for the list of titles for field educators.

40 An expanded list would also include: students, entry-level course on ministry practices, placement process, learning agreement, hour requirements, intern committees/ lay committees, staffing (beyond the director.) During the regional convenings, I used a PowerPoint presentation in which one slide listed the basic elements of field education. At each regional gathering, participants scrutinized my lists and always added more essential elements beyond whatever I had previously compiled. This is not an insignificant issue, because one of the final critiques of the project, when the report was made to the biennial gathering of field educators, was that the lay committee should have been an essential element of field education in that the person critiquing the pedagogical models felt that they did not adequately convey the centrality of the work done in context with students.

41 Emily Click, “A Report Describing Theological Field Education” (unpublished manuscript, Claremont School of Theology, 2003).

42 See Appendix D for an initial version of the schema for the models.

43 Just as I had done in the interview process, each of these meetings was tape recorded and then selectively transcribed. Unfortunately there was a technical problem in the tape recording at the Ontario, California gathering, so that is the only meeting with no tape recorded record of the sessions.

44 Participants were compensated with a modest stipend of \$400. Their travel and other expenses were covered under a Lilly grant administered by Scott Cormode at Claremont School of Theology. The Lilly grant is for the study of education of religious leaders.

45 See Appendix E for a list of participants in the regional gatherings.

46 Participants also were asked to read an article by Atul Gawande that reflects on how professionals learn in action. See Atul Gawande, "The Learning Curve," *The New Yorker*, January 28, 2002, 52-61.

47 Appendix D lists all of those who attended, by meeting date and location. One person, Donna Duensing of San Francisco Theological Seminary, was able to attend two meetings. I found her presence at the final meeting particularly helpful as she was able to reflect with me on the differences between group responses, and also to reflect with me on the shifts I had made in interpreting the materials since the second gathering in Ontario, which she had also attended.

48 From the author's transcription of the session at the Indianapolis Sheraton, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2003. Randy Nelson has directed field education at Luther Seminary for over twenty-seven years, and is one of the most senior field educators in the country today.

49 These ATS requirements are listed in more detail in the next chapter.

50 Craig Nesson, Wartburg Theological Seminary. From the author's transcription of the session at the Indianapolis Sheraton, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2003.

51 This second group of survey respondents, just to the question of length of service, is listed at the end of Appendix B.

52 At a later gathering in Newport Beach, California (March 2004), when I presented the results of my extended survey of length of service, Dudley Rose of Harvard Divinity School offered that perhaps the results were skewed by my use of average instead of median. He suggested that the median would be a lower number, and would more accurately reflect the reality that many field educators serve for a very short period of time, while a few serve for decades. This interaction seemed to me to be of a different character. In suggesting the substitution of another way of using and interpreting existing data, Rose was not declaring facts based on his own perceptions and experience, but was instead using a standard method of evaluating and incorporating research-based data.

53 Mark Fowler, of Garrett-Evangelical Seminary testified to this when he said "Well, there was an acknowledgement [by Emily] that we all shared something similar that we don't necessarily share outside this type of collegium. That you acknowledged that I think is essential. We could have all come together and not found that, and just been advisors to you [addressing Emily]. I think what you said to us was really important." In this quote he was indicating that we had formed a learning community that did not already exist apart from that gathering. From the author's transcription of the session at the Indianapolis Sheraton, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2003.

54 Mark Fowler, Garrett-Evangelical Seminary. From the author's transcription of the discussion at the regional gathering, Indianapolis Sheraton Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2003.

55 See Appendix F for a list of participants in the Newport Beach, March, 2004 gathering.

56 Just as was done at the previous gatherings, I recorded all of the conversations and selectively transcribed them. Another way of recording was added at this meeting. Becky Bane, a colleague from Claremont School of Theology with special expertise in visually mapping conversations and interactions, sketched participants and made diagrams of how we interacted with each other.

57 Participants also were assigned to read another article in advance of the meeting: Craig Dykstra, "Evaluation as Collaborative Inquiry," *Initiative in Religion* 2, no. 4 (Fall 1993): 1-2.

58 David Nygren et al., "Outstanding Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations: Leadership Competencies in Roman Catholic Religious Orders," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 4, no. 4 (1994): 375-91.

59 The Newport Beach meeting had several presentations. Robert T. O'Gorman gave the results of his sabbatical research into the role of context in the theological curriculum. Another session focused on the use of competencies in TFE. These are lists of desired outcomes. This introduced another way for field educators to reflect on the similarities and differences in their approaches beyond simply reflecting on my research findings.

60 See Appendix G for a list of participants in the Nashville, Tennessee gathering.

61 Attendees included William Kondrath, Episcopal Divinity School at Cambridge; Dudley Rose, Harvard Divinity School; Michael Dash, Interdenominational Theological Center; Abigail Johnson, Emmanuel College, Victoria University; Scott Cormode, Claremont School of Theology; Katherine Pershey, Claremont School of Theology; Emily Click, Claremont School of Theology; Robert T. O’Gorman, Institute for Pastoral Studies, Loyola University, Chicago; and Gwen Ingram, Fuller Theological Seminary.

## Notes

### Chapter 3

1 Donald F. Beisswenger, “Field Education and the Theological Education Debates,” *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (1996): 49-58. Beisswenger reports that only fourteen percent of field educators responding to a survey responded that the primary purpose for field education was “developing skills for the work of ministry.” The largest number of responses indicated the purpose of field education was “integrating... academic study with practical issues of ministry.”

2 Association of Theological Field Education, *Association of Theological Field Education Biennial Brochure*, January 2005, 2.

3 To be clear, it is, of course, important that students develop skills for ministry. It is also vital for them to be evaluated in relation to their skill level. However, the heart of field education is to develop those skills in such a way that an accompanying capacity for theological reflection directs the employment of those skills. Therefore, a student should not just learn to preach excellently, but also to know when and what to preach. The capacity to reflect is as important to knowing when and what to preach as are the skills of how one delivers a message.

4 Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), 19. Ronald Heifetz distinguishes between technical and adaptive problems. Technical problems can be fixed if one can just find the right technical solution. A car that is out of gas, for example, needs to be filled at the station. Professionals may use technical methods to solve clearly technical problems, but such interactions account for a small portion of what professionals are most needed to be able to do. Heifetz shows that leaders are most needed when there are no easy answers..

5 Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 68. Donald Schön describes someone who is reflective in practice this way: “he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case...He does not separate thinking from doing...Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry.” Schön also establishes another important contrast between reflective practice and technical rationality (287). He shows the differences between the epistemology of practice and the dominant model for professionalism, which emphasizes applying established knowledge to problems (30). In this technical model, scientific theories and techniques enable professionals to develop expertise. He locates the tradition of valuing technical rationality as the heritage of Positivism (31). This study shares the basic assumptions of Positivism where scientific research is the basis for professional practice. The research I have done cannot be classified as the scientific research of professional behavior, or as a study of how schools teach students to apply the scientific research-based knowledge of professionalism. Instead, I study models for developing professional knowing that is associated with the artistic adaptation of established knowledge and competencies to uncertain territories and challenges.

6 Donald A. Schön, *Educating The Reflective Practitioner: Toward A New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), 316. Schön characterizes the shifting definitions of professionalism in terms of the diverging emphases on technical rationality and reflection-in-

action. He argues that recent decades have brought what he calls “shrinking professional autonomy”. He shows that recent trends impose supposed objective external controls on professionals that undermine their autonomy and reinforce the need to turn away from reflection-in-action toward technical rationality. So teachers, for example, currently must respond to heightened requirements that their teaching meet standards set by competency testing for students.

7 I am using a definition of professional practice that correlates with Jean Piaget’s emphasis on knowledge being based in learning how to relate effectively to one’s environment. Such a conception of professional practice comprises knowledge as an ability to gather information about environment, a competence in exercising appropriate options for relating to the environment, and a capacity to develop creative conceptions of what it means to be effective.

8 *The Oxford English Dictionary*, (accessed 24 April, 2004); available from <http://dictionary.oed.com/>. *The Oxford English Dictionary* points to several meanings of epistemology. On the one hand epistemology is the ground of knowledge. It also signifies the process of knowledge. I use the term to signify the ways students come into the knowledge of how to be professionals, by which I mean religious leaders.

9 As will be explored later in more detail, not all internships are in pastoral or congregational settings. It might not even be accurate to describe all internships as ministerial. For example, in some programs students might serve in a non-Christian governmental service agency. The student’s own sense of identity also might or might not be ministerial. Some might simply prefer to emphasize the aspect of service associated with their internship.

10 Herbert P. Ginsburg and Sylvia Oppen, *Piaget’s Theory of Intellectual Development*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 13. The other reason I use the term epistemology is the way my work is based in an understanding of education as developmental. My understandings come from Jean Piaget’s genetic epistemology, in which he studied the way children developed intellectual understandings through their actions. Piaget believed that the thoughts of infants derived from actions, not language. Ginsburg and Oppen describe Piaget’s primary goal as “the study of children’s gradual attainment of intellectual structures which allow for increasingly effective interactions with the environment” Piaget’s study of the intellectual development of children may seem a far cry from the preparation of religious leaders. I am convinced, however, that adults also learn through action. They develop knowledge of how to relate effectively to their environments largely by acting in those environments. While it was not the focus of the study to observe students as they developed knowledge, nevertheless the study identifies important assumptions various programs make about how learning environments serve as effective hosts to such developmental processes..

11 TFE certainly is not the only location for experiential leadership education. Many religious education courses, for example, require students to become deeply engaged as leaders within ministry contexts. Most pastoral care and counseling courses similarly require students to engage in some way with an actual counseling situation. Some theological schools, such as the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, now build contextual components into most of the coursework toward the M.Div. degree. In most theological schools, however, TFE remains the first and most major opportunity for students to engage in leadership experience while they are learning.

12 A March, 2004 gathering in Claremont, California of field educators from eight United Methodist theological schools focused on this topic. The discussion explored how to prepare students for a church of the future that will be significantly different from the church of today, yet in ways impossible to predict.

13 In the Ontario Consultation (Ontario, California, September 25-26, 2003) on TFE, for example, all of the participants named theological reflection as the focus of their programs. Each program differed significantly on how to structure theological reflection, and on the particulars of precisely what theological reflection might be. Other TFE programs would also emphasize mentoring, skill building, vocational discernment, and experience.

14 Participants at the Ontario Consultation (September 25-26, 2003) named the questioning of assumptions, the building of self-awareness, and the adoption and adaptation of tools of theological reflection as the foci of their programs. Programs differed in what they named as the “end” purpose of

their programs of theological reflection. In some cases, the goal was for students to develop their own model of theological reflection. In other cases, the goal was for students to become able experiment strategically with any model of theological reflection. All agreed that theological reflection without action is not worthwhile.

15 The Association of Theological Schools in United States and Canada, "Capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership," *ATS Degree Program Standards* (2002). in A.3.1.4 of the ATS degree program standards (for the M.Div. degree).

16 *Contextual Leadership*, by Randy A. Nelson and Laure Schwartz; 2004 ed.: accessed Spring 2004; available from [http://www.luthersem.edu/coned/Contextual\\_Leadership.asp](http://www.luthersem.edu/coned/Contextual_Leadership.asp).

17 See chapter 8 for a more complete description of Luther Seminary's program.

18 *Field Education Handbook*, by the staff of the field education program at Boston University School of Theology (accessed 1 July, 2003), available from <http://www.bu.edu/sth/>.

19 The Walk to Emmaus is a program that schedules retreats that support spiritual development for Christians.

20 This highlights the reality that field education programs function in parallel, although not always in coordinated ways, with ordination processes that are supervised and dictated by judicatories. This means that students who intend to be ordained must not only complete whatever requirements are associated with the field education program, but they must also participate in sometimes extensive processes dictated by the denomination.

21 A mid-sized theological school would have an FTE of about 175. Full-time equivalent indicates how many students the school enrolls. Instead of counting the total number of actual students, however, the figure calculates a total based on the tuition-based hours the student body takes at any given time. So a school may have a total of 400 students enrolled full and part-time. But when their total number of hours enrolled in courses is calculated that school's FTE might be more like 175. This FTE figure provides a standard measure for the size of schools although it does not purport to account for the actual number of students that might have some relationship to the school. The figure is relevant in this study because the actual number of field education students will always be some percentage of the FTE. One might also look at field education as a subset of the average number of M.Div. graduates in any given year. In other words, if a school averages 25 M.Div. graduates per year over five years; one might be able to predict how many field education students would be enrolled during any given year.

22 Conversations about callings certainly also occur elsewhere in the seminary environment, such as with key professors. Still, field education is the likeliest spot for extended, careful conversations about the discernment of call.

23 Sharan B. Merriam and Rosemary S. Caffarella, *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1999): 289. Sharan Merriam points to the importance of self-planned learning (a term first developed by Tough), in which learners have three goals, "(1) to enhance the ability of adult learners to be self-directed in their learning, (2) to foster transformational learning as central to self-directed learning, and (3) to promote emancipatory learning and social action as an integral part of self-directed learning."

24 At most schools, this would mean that she would have completed approximately eight courses toward her degree. These courses might or might not treat such subjects as preaching and pastoral care. Instead, in some institutions, the first coursework focuses on classical disciplines, such as church history and ethics, and the "practical" courses are deferred until the second and third year. This means that Josephine might preach and counsel in her internship before she has completed, and sometimes before she has even taken a preaching or counseling course.

25 As I will explain in a future chapter, I found that programs vary widely on the amount of hours required of students in the field. Some require as little as five hours per week, while others require as much as fifteen.

26 Shadow is a term signifying accompanying and observing but not yet performing the basic functions in ministry. So an intern might accompany the pastor in a hospital visit, but remain largely silent while the pastor engaged a caring conversation and prayer.

27 Many, but not all programs describe these reflective sessions as being theologically reflective. In other words, many programs want the supervisor to do more than review the how's of what the student does, and instead pose difficult questions about the theological meanings embedded in the student's ministerial experiences.

28 Most programs that offer field education as a part-time option also include an option for students to do a full-time internship instead. In my research, it appeared that in these programs only a small minority, 3-4, ever take this full-time option.

29 By calculating field education as 1 out of 5 courses during one of three years of study, field education is 1/12 to 1/15 of the student's work toward the M.Div.

30 Most Lutheran seminaries currently require full-time internships. This is equally true of Missouri Synod and Evangelical Church of America related schools.

31 Schools who only have the full-time option for field education do, however, hire regional part-time staff who support the students and supervisors. Additionally, the director and field education staff usually travel extensively to visit the students at their internship sites.

32 Usually these programs do not gather students together for reflective seminars since they are so spread out geographically.

33 Glenn Nielsen, of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis put it this way: "It was interesting to hear Jeffrey (Mahan, of Iliff Seminary) talk about the lay committee, and the theology of the lay committee. There's nothing in our program that has to do with that, with lay committees for the interns. Our theology of the pastoral office, of the relationship to the congregation takes a decidedly different form (from what you are calling for in these lay committees)." October 2003.

34 Frequently programs will require that a supervisor enroll in the course concurrently with supervising the student.

35 For example, Princeton Theological Seminary has five staff persons in the field education department, while Regents College has just one field educator with no administrative support. They host similar numbers of students in their field education programs.

## Notes

### Chapter 4

1 The section summarizes and interprets the data I collected in interviewing over forty persons active in field education. On the survey I asked these questions about field educators:

"What is the full name and title of the field Educator?

Are there additional staff (beyond the director) assisting with field education? (List anyone other than the director. Include titles and designate as full or part time.)

Does your job description include responsibilities outside of field education? What are those responsibilities? How is your time divided?

How do you work collaboratively with other faculty? Co-teach? Develop curriculum? On committees? Teach portions of courses?

Does the director hold a faculty position? If so, is the position tenure track?

How did the field education director enter academic work?

Give the educational background of the director. (If you are currently pursuing a degree, include that information as well.)

List the most influential people/books for the director.

Has the director published in the area of field education?"

These questions provided most of the information for this chapter. However, since the research also included four regional gatherings of field educators, the transcriptions of those discussions also are an important resource for data about what field educators do and who they are.

2 “The History of ATFE: a Living Document,” *Proceedings from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Gathering of ATFE*, Minneapolis, MN, 1995.

3 For a more complete version of the history of ATFE, see Maureen Egan, “The History of the Association for Theological Field Education and its Contribution to Theological Education in the United States, 1946 – 1979” (Ph.D. diss., St. Louis University, 1987), 200-208.

4 Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, *The Fact Book on Theological Education* (Vandalia, OH: Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, 2002-2003). In A.3.1.4 of the ATS degree program standards (for the M.Div. degree), titled “Capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership, the ATS asks its schools to “provide for courses in the areas of ministry practice and for educational experiences within supervised ministry settings.”

5 Robert T. O’Gorman, Kathleen Talvacchia, and W. Michael Smith, “Teaching from a Community Context: The Role of the Field Educator in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 37, no. 2 (2001): 3. Their article was based on a consultation of field educators established by Wabash Institute for Teaching and Learning.

6 O’Gorman, et al., “Teaching,” 8.

7 Barbara Mutch (Charles Bentall Chair of Pastoral Studies, in joint appointment to Carey Theological and Regent Colleges), interview with the author, July 3, 2003.

8 Sam Johnson (Boston University), interview with the author, July 1, 2003.

9 For example, Jeffrey Mahan is a full, tenured professor at Iliff School of Theology. He serves on a multiple year contract in recognition of the administrative portion of his responsibilities. His tenure is partly recognition of his wider scholarship in the arena of media and culture. Dudley Rose serves Harvard Divinity School on a multi-year renewable contract, as a full faculty person but without tenure.

10 One exception to this is at Boston University, where the field education director has one half vote in all faculty meetings.

11 When the field educator did not teach a seminar, it was for a variety of reasons. In some cases, the seminar is not located on campus, such as at Wartburg Theological Seminary and at Luther Seminary. At Fuller Theological Seminary, Gwen Ingram does not teach a seminar partly because she does not see herself as a teacher.

12 Craig Nesson, Academic Dean and Professor of Contextual Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary, holds these degrees: Doctor of Theology, University of Munich; Master of Sacred Theology, Wartburg Theological Seminary; M.Div., Wartburg Theological Seminary; as well as a B.A. He believes that his background as a systematic theologian strengthens his work in his calling as a Dean and in his calling as the Director of Internship.

13 Jeffrey Mahan has just been named to become the new Dean at Iliff School of Theology in July of 2005. He has directed the field education program there for over eight years, and during that time he has taught courses in religion, media and culture in addition to field education courses. He holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and an M.Div. from Garrett-Evangelical Seminary.

14 It is not uncommon for theological schools to teach courses specifically focused on leadership that are in addition to the coursework explicitly connected with field education. In many, but not all schools, the field educator also teaches the leadership courses. Lisa Withrow teaches courses in Church leadership; Pastoral care; Women's studies; Administration; and Worship in addition to field education. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Glasgow and an M.Div. from Duke University Divinity School.

15 These schools actually represent two distinct denominations, both of which use the term “Lutheran.” Concordia St. Louis is part of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, and Wartburg and Luther are part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. I put them together here because they do share the same approach to internships in that students must complete a full-time full year internship between their second and final years of seminary preparation.

16 Glenn Nielsen (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis), in discussion with the author (Indianapolis), Fall, 2003.

17 Jane Maynard (Church Divinity School of the Pacific), shared that the previous field education director at CDSF became its academic dean. He remembered her work from her M.Div. days at CDSF, and knew she was working toward her Ph.D. He invited her to come to direct the field education program.

18 In the history of ATFE, it should be noted, there was a period when there were intentional training seminars on the subject of supervision. Julieanne Hallman, now Director at Andover Newton Theological School, named the importance of attending one of these seminars. The seminars were held in the off years when the Biennial Consultation was not happening, with the intention of supporting both new directors and pastors who would be learning to supervise. These seminars took place for just a few years, and have not been continued.

19 For example, at the Vancouver Biennial Gathering in 1998, Robert T. O’Gorman and Jean Stairs held two half-day clinics for new field educators. Their goals were: to affirm ATFE as a positive context and basic resource for TFE, to assist new field educators in the process of establishing effective field education programs, to enable new field educators to discover and claim their educational role with supervisors and students, to provide an experience of a learning community that models field education methodology, and to draw attention to useful resources. During the two sessions, O’Gorman and Stairs presented the basic elements of TFE, and gave helpful guidelines for how to build and implement a program.

20 Mark Fowler (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary), interview with the author, July 9, 2003. Fowler named his pursuit of the D. Min. degree at Andover Newton Theological School as influential for his work in TFE. Samuel Johnson of Boston University School of Theology also named the influence of Andover Newton Theological School as formative in his work.

21 My early years of research confirmed this impression. Almost without exception, directors offered me large amounts of time and energy to help me understand the field. They shared their materials with me, and offered highly valuable advice and guidance about what to avoid. Similarly, when I have come across thorny problems in my own work as a director, I have phoned other directors, who have either helped me themselves or referred me to others with the particular expertise I needed. It is a field of very generous people.

22 Field educators frequently have been practitioners not only in the sense that they have been ordained leaders in a congregational setting. They have been reflective practitioners, who have been attentive to the ways generalized principles are customized in a variety of settings.

23 Rose currently chairs the steering committee of ATFE, a professional organization of field educators.

24 Dudley Rose, *A Guide to Theological Field Education* (Harvard Divinity School, 2000), 4. Rose has shared an initial draft of an as-yet-unpublished manuscript of a text about Field Education. In the manuscript, he tells about his own background and commitments to ministry practice as well as the preparation for ministry in order to inform the reader about his perspective in writing about field education.

25 Samuel Johnson, of Boston University School of Theology also works part-time as a pastor. Matt Floding, of Western Theological Seminary, sometimes serves as a part-time pastor in a parish where they have no pastor, and he often has a senior student also serve part-time in the same parish.

26 In the final three chapters, I distinguish between programs that focus reflection most intentionally in the seminar, and others that focus it most intentionally in the supervisory relationship in the field, and those where reflection occurs in reference to the entire curriculum of the theological school. Here I merely reference the reality that whatever the emphasis, still nearly every program has the element of the reflective seminar.

27 It should be noted that there are exceptions, schools where there is no seminar at all. Princeton Theological Seminary reports it does not have this component.

28 Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry does use the term practicum.

29 These are the questions in that section of the survey:

“Is there a requirement for some type of reflective seminar?

Describe the seminar. When and how often does the seminar convene?

How many students average in a seminar?

Reading/Academic Requirements for seminar/How does the seminar promote theological reflection?

Who resources/teaches/staffs reflective seminar? (Are they faculty, pastors, Ph.D. students, the director of field education, etc.)

Describe the qualifications of reflective seminar leaders. Who selects and then supervises their work?”

30 Kathleen Talvacchia, interview with the author, July 3, 2003.

31 Nancy Tatom Ammerman, et al., eds., *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

32 Jeffrey Mahan (Iliff School of Theology), interview with the author, June 16, 2003.

33 Don McCrabb (Dominican House of Studies), interview with the author, July 3, 2003.

34 Youtha Hardman-Cromwell (Wesley Theological Seminary), interview with the author, May 20, 2003.

35 Mark Fowler (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary), interview with the author, July 9, 2003.

36 Matt Floding (Western Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 26, 2003.

37 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, *Handbook for Field Education* (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL, 2003).

38 In the United Methodist church, elders are ordained for sacramental ministry, while deacons are ordained for special ministries. The attempt to bring both types of leaders into the teaching of seminars represents an effort to provide visible strong role models for each form of ministry that are highly valued within the United Methodist tradition. I did not hear any other school that was consciously attempting to recruit agency leaders to be seminar teachers.

39 At the 2005 biennial meeting for ATFE in Toronto, Canada, there was a workshop in which manuals were presented and examined. This workshop has generated an ongoing conversation among field educators about the best ways to construct manuals for varying purposes.

40 A verbatim is a transcription of a caring conversation. Often the verbatim also includes some form of analysis, either of the reasons for the person's difficulties, or of the approach of the caring listener.

41 Survey response, Harvard Divinity School, Dudley Rose, respondent. To quote from the survey response from Harvard Divinity School, “[We do not have separate manuals because] philosophically, we are committed to transparency around supervisory issues, policies and procedures.”

42 Harry Freebairn, of Princeton Theological Seminary, made this point at the Boston regional gathering, September, 2003.

43 Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, “The Iron Cage Revisited Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields” in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 63-82. There is a remarkable consistency across programs about the need for a manual, and what will be included in the manual. The consistency was so striking I was almost led to postulate that there was a prototype manual extant. I never found one. In a chapter on the ways organizations tend to achieve just this type of duplication, DiMaggio and Powell explore how organizations develop conformity for a variety of reasons. Sometime organizations are coerced to do so, such as when government regulations require that groups follow only certain formats. However, organizations also develop conformity as a way of achieving a type of legitimacy with other organizations. Powell and DiMaggio study the ways this is true for various types of organizations, including professionals. They point out some of the reasons for conformity: “organizations are rewarded for their similarity to other organizations in their fields...to be acknowledged as legitimate and reputable...None of this, however, ensures that conformist organizations do what they do more efficiently than do their more deviant peers” (73). It is possible that field education is responding to the very uncertain and unpredictable circumstances it faces by operating in diverse contexts with manuals that are remarkably similar to each other. This conformity may serve a purpose of conferring legitimacy on programs, and also establishing a sense of predictability in a field that is riddled with uncertain variables. There is no requirement that programs have manuals, nor is there a formal agreement within ATFE that manuals should take on any particular form. Yet I found that manuals were nearly universal, and that programs had adopted certain basic ideas of what should and should not appear in their manuals. In spite of this effort that programs put into producing and printing and distributing manuals, there has been no study of the efficacy of manuals in improving the performance of supervisors, the learning of students, or

the comprehension of participants about any aspect of the program. Thus it is possible that manuals are more clearly effective at conferring legitimacy on programs than at serving as useful teaching tools.

44 In the Boston, 2003 gathering of field educators Harry Freebairn noted that the manual was the primary way of orienting and training his program's supervisors.

45 This discussion was somewhat uncomfortable and embarrassing, until I pointed out to the participants that I had not included any definitions of theological reflections in the handbook for my own program. My own incoherence was significant, as I did feel that theological reflection was something that should be thoroughly treated in the handbooks, as well as in other orientation and training sessions. It was only through the very process of reflecting that I was leading the participants through that I myself did the kind of reflecting that enabled me to identify, and eventually rectify, this inconsistency.

46 Chris Argyris, "Good Communication that Blocks Learning," *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 1994, 77-85. My intention was to surface one area where I suspected there would be evidence of disparity between what Chris Argyris calls "theory in use" and "espoused theory." He explains: "Each of us has what I call an espoused theory of action based on principles and precepts that fit our intellectual backgrounds and commitments. But most of us have quite a different theory-in-use to which we resort in moments of stress. And very few of us are aware of the contradiction between the two. In short, most of us are consistently inconsistent in the way we act." I was concerned that there might be confusion between what is really happening in the field education context, and what manuals proclaim should be happening. I was looking for awareness of the distance between using an official document to declare what should be done, and the reality of implementing even the best of intentions. I might suggest that this gap is the territory of education (80).

47 Here is a sampling of survey responses to the question, "what gaps are there between the manual and actual practice?" Very few, "I'm not sure how to answer that. I just read a really late report that came in from a mentor saying that they hadn't met regularly," "I would say significant. For example, in our handbook, there is probably two or three methods of theological reflection talked about. That's really changed." "Probably they exist in expectations, such as the amount of time to spend in supervision." These responses show that it is quite difficult for a director to know whether or not a manual is being used as intended.

48 Sondra Higgins Matthaei, *Faith Matters: Faith-Mentoring in the Faith Community* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996). Matthaei gives a helpful summary of the relevance of Homer's character Mentor in her book. She shows the historic pre-Christian connection between divine influence and mentoring: "Athene was the warrior goddess who fought on the side of the Achaeans against the Trojans. In *The Odyssey*, Athene uses her wisdom to guide Odysseus and his son, Telemachus, disguised as Odysseus's boyhood friend, Mentor. Athene advocates for Odysseus by speaking to Zeus on his behalf, and she is a guide for Odysseus's projects and a resource for his needs." She points out that some writers look to Athene as a "soul-giver" and "soul-maker" for the way that she aids Telemachus and Penelope in being able to "find their true selves and to live with integrity" (12).

49 James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

50 Institutional charts are also questionable sources of information about the actual location of any part of the curriculum. Just drawing a diagram that places a program at the center does not necessarily centralize its functioning in relation to the rest of the curriculum.

51 The Dominican House of Studies and Luther Seminary have a similar way of requiring field education. It is a degree requirement but does not receive academic credit.

52 Belva Brown Jordan (Lancaster Theological Seminary), interview with the author, July 1999. Dr. Jordan now teaches at another divinity school.

53 The question of the faculty status of the director does not, however, necessarily clarify the place of field education in regard to the rest of the curriculum. For example, Gwen Ingram, at Fuller Theological Seminary, is not officially a member of faculty, and does not have a vote. She, however, attends faculty meetings at the invitation of the Dean. Her administrative status makes it seem as though field education is in a marginalized position relative to the rest of the work of the faculty, and the curriculum. In contrast, at Harvard Divinity School, Dudley Rose is a full voting member of the faculty.

## Notes

### Chapter 5

1 Stephen B. Bevens, *Models of Contextual Theology*, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 29. Bevens quotes Ian G. Barbour on theoretical models as saying they are “a symbolic representation of selected aspects of the behaviour of a complex system for particular purposes.”

2 Ian G. Barbour, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms: A Comparative Study in Science and Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974). This is a quote from Bevens, *Models*, 30.

3 Bevens, *Models*, 30-31.

4 Bevens, *Models*, 31.

5 Avery Dulles, *Models of Revelation* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 30. This is a quote from Bevens, *Models*, 29.

6 Robert T. O’Gorman, “Contextual Education of the Reflective Practitioner, Part 1, The Shift to Contextual Education,” (lecture, 28th Biennial Consultation, ATFE, Toronto, Canada, January 19-23, 2005). Mutual critical critique is a term from David Tracey’s theology, which is referenced in O’Gorman’s lecture, and I am using it here in a slightly different way, to emphasize the role of putting experience into dialog not just with theology, but also with all of the types of theory and abstract learning in an M.Div. curriculum. I am influenced in this interpretation by the work of O’Gorman, and particularly in his lecture to the biennial gathering of ATFE in 2005.

7 Chris Argyris, *Knowledge for Action: A Guide to Overcoming Barriers to Organizational Change* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1993). Chris Argyris demonstrates the importance of identifying variables within an organization. Variables would be another term to describe what I call competing assumptions. In an attempt to foster greater organizational learning, Argyris and a team of researchers worked with organizations to develop what they called action maps. These maps depicted patterns of interrelationships between how people reacted in relation to variables. In these cases, they were mostly looking at factors like how persons acted in relation to disappointing sales targets, the loss of important customers, the establishment of new evaluative procedures, and other business-related variables. Within Argyris’ studies, the maps were used to predict future actions. Argyris and his team-taught organizations about change by demonstrating the ways these maps showed ingrained dysfunctional habits in the organization. While much of Argyris’ study is business-oriented, some of these principles help illuminate precisely the concepts I address in this text. In a similar vein to Argyris’ study, my study shows some of the ways field educators relate to variables. They come to certain conclusions about how best to take action based on their perception of the tradeoffs between one resolution and another. To some extent, this study is an attempt to make these decisions more accessible for reflection, or more discussable. However, such description will only be of limited value to field education’s ongoing development. Argyris also used the maps to demonstrate how difficult it is for organizations to shift the ways they relate to variables. No doubt this study is just the beginning for field education to draw its own action maps, which then may help clarify areas that are dysfunctional as well as functional within field education. This study provides a few vital tools for developing such maps. It provides descriptive materials, it identifies variables, and shows patterns of relationships between variables through the use of educational theories.

8 Jeffrey Mahan (Iliff School of Theology), interview with the author, October 27, 2003. In a phone interview with Jeffrey Mahan, he explained that he prefers not to use the term mentoring because for him it was important to preserve the distinction between a mentoring relationship, which is entered into voluntarily, and supervision, which is assigned by another in order to address specific tasks. For Mahan, mentoring is the deeply personal type of relationship that may rarely occur within the context of TFE, but would not be the norm. “I resist the use of mentor because I think the mentor is a voluntary relationship that may or may not occur between a more experienced person and someone earlier in their career. Supervisor

is a role that you can assign and implies particular power and authority...many field educators are now adopting the term mentor because it is a less hierarchical and more collaborative term..." In this chapter, partly to enhance readability, I use the terms supervisor, mentor, and elder interchangeably. These terms, however, are not used interchangeably in TFE programs. Programs usually are intentional about describing their teachers in context either as supervisors or as mentors. At Claremont School of Theology, however, we call them Supervising Mentors.

9 Requirements for the amount of hours students will spend in their setting vary from a low of five per week (this is true at the Dominican House of Studies, but there the seminarians are in placements every semester of their study) to a high of fifteen hours per week (at Union Theological Seminary, for example.)

10 A few programs designate every other week meetings, but the vast majority requires students to meet for one hour per week with the supervisor. The most frequently cited concern on the surveys and in conversations with field educators was supervisors' lack of compliance with this central requirement of the program.

11 At Andover Newton Theological School the field educator reads these reports after the student has shared them with the supervisor.

12 Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, *The Fact Book on Theological Education*, (accessed September 28, 2004); available from: <http://www.ats.edu> page 5 of the PDF.

13 Fuller Theological Seminary has programs in Menlo Park, Sacramento, Walnut Creek, Oakland, Seattle, Tacoma, Bellevue, Colorado Springs, Phoenix, Tucson and Las Vegas in addition to the main Pasadena campus.

14 Gwen Ingram (Director of Field Education, Fuller Theological Seminary), interview with the author, February 12, 2003.

15 Gwen Ingram is currently writing her D. Min. dissertation on this topic.

16 Fuller Theological Seminary, *Supervisor Handbook*, (accessed September 20, 2004); available from: [http://www.fuller.edu/sot/fielded/Vital\\_Docs/SupHbk.pdf](http://www.fuller.edu/sot/fielded/Vital_Docs/SupHbk.pdf).

17 Fuller Theological Seminary, *How to Become a Supervisor*, (accessed September 20, 2004); available from: [http://www.fuller.edu/sot/fielded/Info\\_SS/SitesSups.asp](http://www.fuller.edu/sot/fielded/Info_SS/SitesSups.asp). The full text, from the Fuller Theological Seminary website on field education, with regard to supervisor qualifications, is: "One of the three most important components of an internship is the relationship between the supervisor and the intern (along with practical experience and theological reflection). Indeed, the supervisor's vision for ministry may well influence the intern's future vocational direction and style of ministry. It is for this reason we invite you to partner with us in the significant task of preparing individuals for ministry and helping to discern their gifts and call. *All Field Education supervisors at Fuller must be certified.* For those who have not previously supervised a Fuller intern, this means completing a Supervisor Application and reading and agreeing to our Supervisor Orientation Guidelines. Certification for new supervisors is necessary for internship approval. Those who have previously supervised one or more Fuller interns must renew their certification every two years and will be notified when due for renewal. Following are our qualifications and requirements for supervisors.

#### Supervisor Qualifications and Requirements

A minimum of three years in a related full-time ministry position.\*

At least one year in your current position.\*

Formal theological training (i.e. Bible school or seminary level theological training).\*

Commitment to spend at least one hour per week with the intern in evaluation, planning, theological reflection, and prayer.

Completion of the Learning Agreement with the intern prior to starting the internship, and evaluation of the intern's work at the end of each quarter.

Commitment to provide a structure that is challenging, educational and supportive, and to ensure the participation of the church or organization in the internship.

Completion of the certification process for supervisors:

Commitment to professional and ethical conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, adherence to the faith statement affirmed by the Fuller Seminary community.

18 O’Gorman served as chairperson of ATFE from 1999-2001. He is the current chairperson of the Religious Educators Association.

19 Luther Seminary, (accessed October 4, 2004); available from: <http://www.luthersem.edu/>. According to its website approximately 80% of its students belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

20 Luther Seminary, (accessed October 4, 2004); available from: <http://www.luthersem.edu/>.

21 Randy Nelson (Luther Seminary), interview with the author (Indianapolis), October 11, 2003.

22 Luther Seminary also has additional satellite staff who visit and resource students during their internships, since they are located throughout the country and it is not logistically possible for one director to visit and resource everyone. Additionally, in recent months the field education program at the Pacific Lutheran seminary and the program at Luther Seminary have coordinated use of staff.

23 Randy Nelson currently serves on the steering committee of ATFE, as its treasurer.

24 Another possibility for seminars in the mentoring model is that they support learning about spiritual disciplines. At Regents College, for example, Barbara Mutch has as many as fifty students in a seminar at one time. They might read a book by Eugene Peterson or Susan Howatch, about spirituality. The fact that she has up to fifty students in a seminar points to the fact that these seminars are not intended to be focused on an individual student’s developmental journey. The seminar is more generalized, like any other course.

25 Randy Nelson (Luther Seminary), interview with the author (Indianapolis), October, 2003.

26 See, for example, Faye J. Crosby, “The Developing Literature on Developmental Relationships,” in *Mentoring Dilemmas: Developmental Relationships Within Multicultural Organizations*, ed. Audrey J. Murrell, Faye J. Crosby and Robin J. Ely, 3-20 (Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1999). Crosby explores the links between developmental literature, including Gail Sheehy, *Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life* (New York: Dutton, 1976) and Daniel Levinson, et al., *The Seasons of a Man’s Life* (New York: Knopf, 1978) and the emergence of mentoring literatures. Her particular focus is on the diversity issues within these developmental relationships

27 However, some field educators, most notably Lynn Rhodes at Pacific School of Religion, would point out that the relationship between students and laypersons is of equal value in terms of learning potential and these relationships are also developmental relationships, just as are the relationships between students and pastors.

28 Randy Nelson (Luther Seminary), interview with the author (Indianapolis), October 11, 2003.

29 Julieanne Hallman (Andover Newton Theological School), notes from the 2003 Boston consultation on field education (Boston, MA: September 2003).

30 Glenn Nielsen (Concordia Seminary), interview with the author (Indianapolis), October, 2003. Nielsen challenges the centrality of theological reflection. Instead, he upholds the model of learning by doing: “At what point is there....does this whole emphasis on reflection fit into that becoming a pastor? My challenge back to you is, is this as essential as you make it out to be?...I’m coming from the perspective that it’s not an integral part of the seminary, in some ways. See one, do one, teach one.”

31 David A. Kolb, “Learning Styles and Disciplinary Differences,” in *The Modern American College*, ed. Arthur W. Chickering and associates, 232-255 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1981), 236.

32 I say usually here because sometimes students are placed in congregations where they become the senior or solo pastor, and they are supervised by a neighboring pastor who is not actually leading the community in which they are doing ministry.

33 Craig Nesson (Wartburg Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 30, 2003.

## Notes

### Chapter 6

1 I found, through the survey that it was extremely rare for programs to place more than ten students into one group for the seminar, no matter which model they were operating within. An exception to this is at Carey Theological College, where up to fifty students are in the seminar each semester.

2 David A. Kolb, "Learning Styles and Disciplinary Differences," in *The Modern American College*, ed. Arthur W. Chickering and associates, 236 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1981).

3 Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry description, (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu>.

4 Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry description, (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu>.

5 Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry description, (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu>.

6 Richard Cunningham also served on the steering committee for ATFE from 1999-2005 as its treasurer.

7 Richard Cunningham (Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry), interview with the author, July 15, 2003.

8 Richard Cunningham (Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry), interview with the author, July 15, 2003. Quotes in this paragraph are from a telephone interview.

9 Contextual Education: Formation/Field Education, Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry description, (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu>.

10 Killen, Patricia O'Connell and John de Beer, *The Art of Theological Reflection* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

11 George I. Hunter. *Supervision and Education-Formation for Ministry* (Cambridge: Episcopal Divinity School, 1982).

12 Richard Cunningham, "Manual for Ministerial and Theological Integration: Student Course Material" (manual, School of Theology and Ministry Seattle University, August 2003). Here I am quoting from the text of the manual, which summarizes Mary Hunt's approach but does not list a bibliographic citation for her work.

13 John Shea, *Stories of God – An Unauthorized Biography* (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1978).

14 Seattle University, "School of Theology and Ministry, Contextual Education: Formation/Field Education," (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu/theomin/Fielded/fielded.asp>.

15 Seattle University, "School of Theology and Ministry, Contextual Education: Formation/Field Education," (accessed November 21, 2004); available from: <http://www.seattleu.edu/theomin/Fielded/fielded.asp>.

16 Starting in the academic year 2004-05, Union's staffing for field education was drastically reduced, and Dr. Talvacchia left her position at Union. This reduction of staffing was made due to extremely challenging financial realities faced by the administration.

17 Kathleen Talvacchia, and Su Pak Drummond, "FE 103=Field Education Syllabus for Fall 1998" (syllabus, Union Theological Seminary, 1998).

18 Kathleen Talvacchia, and Su Pak Drummond, "FE 103=Field Education Syllabus for Fall 1998" (syllabus, Union Theological Seminary, 1998).

19 Kathleen Talvacchia, Quote from written definition of theological reflection from meeting with field educators (Boston, September, 2003).

20 Kathleen Talvacchia, and Su Pak Drummond, "FE 103=Field Education Syllabus for Fall 1998" (syllabus, Union Theological Seminary, 1998).

21 These are Harvey Mudd, Scripps, Pitzer, Claremont McKenna, and Pomona colleges.

22 In addition to the field educator, Claremont also has an urban ministries professor, and a series of courses in urban studies.

23 Robert Kegan, and Lisa Laskow Lahey, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 2001).

24 Anita Farber Robertson, M.B. Handspicker and David Whiman, *Learning While Leading: Increasing Your Effectiveness in Ministry* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2000).

25 Chris Argyris and Donald Schön, *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Publishers, 1974), 66-67. Chris Argyris establishes contrasting models for what they call theories of action. Through extensive research, they established Model I as a descriptor for the reasoning frequently employed when people decide what actions to take. Model One behaviors prescribe dysfunctional, contrasting values in determining appropriate actions to take. They list these governing variables for Model One behaviors: "1. Define goals and try to achieve them. 2. Maximize winning and minimize losing. 3. Minimize generative or expressing negative feelings, and 4. Be rational." In contrast to Model One guidelines for action, in Model Two, basic assumptions are skewed toward gathering valid information, maximizing free choice, and developing internal commitment to decisions made. Their development of these contrasting models has spurred a whole body of reflective literature about how assumptions guide or even determine actions. They summarize these models for action as theories-in-use, emphasizing the distinction between theories we think we hold (espoused theories) and the actual theories that guide our actions (theories-in-use.)

26 Each year I schedule at least one training meeting at a site in Arizona, since a significant minority of CST students commute from either Phoenix or Tucson.

27 Mark Fowler, "Field Education 10-502a Syllabus, Fall Semester" (syllabus, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2003). For example, at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary, students are required to create a "functional lectionary of your setting." Students are to write a papers in which they list the functional lectionary in relationship to the revised common lectionary. Another assignment is for the students to write a case study that "raises issues of theology and practice and necessitate(s) team participation in reflection upon the case."

28 In response to the survey question about who teaches the reflective seminar, here are some sample responses: From Harvard Divinity School, "Generally they are pastors who have also been trained and have considerable experience as field education supervisors. We are actually in the beginning stages of a curriculum re-design, and are already beginning to implement greater senior faculty involvement in teaching students to think theologically about ministry experiences." In contrast, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific sees facilitation as including maintaining a distance from necessarily controlling what happens in the group: "an important part of our entire program is teaching students about the skills required in colleague groups. We keep them in the same small groups for the whole year. We make sure that we what we do is we try to respect the integrity of their groups. We view our own role as being consulting rather than being a directing role in terms of the group process. All of the assignments are done in the group context.

29 In addition to the earlier example of Iliff Theological Seminary, Asbury Seminary also employs regular faculty persons to lead these groups.

30 Boston University also sometimes uses doctoral students to lead their seminars.

31 I have, for example, had an occasion when a supervisor notified me after the completion of an internship that the student's work was unsatisfactory. This makes it impossible to work with the student on these issues, but although rare, it does occur.

## Notes

### Chapter 7

1 The exploratory nature of this model is evident in the way I encountered considerable skepticism over its existence during the participants' discussions. A number of longtime field educators were concerned that this model did not actually exist anywhere except in the dreams of educators. In other words, they pointed out the possibility that what I had heard persons describe was their wishes for what could and should happen in their theological schools, and not in fact a truly alternate scenario. I found their skepticism to be very helpful, and I kept an open mind about the possibility that there were two, not three models for field education. I kept the third model for several reasons. First, I ran across situations that were different from the first two models, and needed some way to describe those differences. Second, I realized that my methodology was based in programs describing what they did, and what they intended. I did not approach this project with a team of researchers who visited programs and used measurable criteria to smoke out the differences between what people said was happening and what was really happening. It was theoretically possible that in the mentoring programs mentors were not actually working to form their students, and in practica programs seminar leaders were not inculcating theological reflection. This meant that if I truly discovered a core of programs that were using a third, dissimilar way of talking about what they were doing, it formed a model that was, in the parameters of this project, just as valid as the other two.

2 See the Appendix for a more extensive discussion of the field education debates on integration, particularly in endnote 5.

3 Mary Ann Davies, "Integrative Studies: Teaching for the Twenty-first Century," *The History Teacher* 34, no. 4 (August 2001): 471-486. In an article on integrative studies in history, Mary Ann Davies explains the way that an interdisciplinary approach can be organized around a theme. She states: "A theme or pattern acts as the vehicle for organization. Students are presented with a variety of information about this theme...(using) materials (that) require differing modes of perception." This article shows that to speak of an interdisciplinary approach now involves more than combining disciplines, it may also call for combining means of perceiving information, organized around a theme.

4 Mabel Hunsberger, et al., "The Synergism of Expertise in Clinical Teaching: An Integrative Model for Nursing Education," *Journal of Nursing Education* 39, no. 6 (September 2000): 278-282. In a recent paper on nursing education, Mabel Hunsberger, et al suggest that maintaining excellence in clinical education calls for integration not just of theory and practice. It also calls for what they call an "integrative partnership model" in which clinicians and faculty work in equal partnership with each other to teach students in the practical setting. This is because no faculty person in nursing can possibly keep up clinically to the extent of an excellent clinician, due to rapidly changing technologies. However, clinicians also need continually to turn to faculty for their insights. So integration in this case points to something even more complex than integrating theory as ideas into practice. It points to the necessity of building integrative teams that together build a new expertise, about how to intermingle rapidly changing understandings of both theory and practice in the context of treatment of actual patients.

Daniel Davis, Elizabeth Petry, and James Fuller, "Integrative Curriculum in Architectural Engineering Technology," *Proceedings of the 2001 Conference for Industry and Education Collaboration (CIEC)* (San Diego, CA January 30-February 2, 2001). A similar conclusion is reached by Daniel Davis et al in an article on integrating the curriculum in professional education for architecture. There, the authors found that a new curriculum "promotes critical thinking, problem-solving skills and creativity by integrating realistic issues into the architectural design studios...These...courses ...increase the student's awareness of the interrelationships between these areas of study."

5 Lynda Baloché, John Hynes, and Helen Berger, "Moving Toward the Integration of Professional and General Education," *Action in Teacher Education* 18, (Spring 1996): 1-9. Baloché et al., are

referenced in Barbara L. Adams, "Nursing Education for Critical Thinking: An Integrative Review," *Journal of Nursing Education* 38, no. 3 (March 1999): 111-19.

6 Barbara L. Adams, "Nursing Education," 111-19. Adams summarizes the importance of critical thinking in nursing education: "developing skills to think critically promotes a broader menu of options with which to analyze problems and make decisions. These skills are particularly important as current nurses encounter more acutely ill patients, increasing technology, and complex ethical issues." The example of nursing education could easily be translated into many other professions, including ministry. Adams has studied how integrative teaching is important to enabling students to develop critical thinking.

7 The Carnegie Foundation, "Integrative Learning Project: Opportunities to Connect," (accessed Spring, 2004); available from: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/IntegrativeLearning/>.

8 The Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "A Statement on Integrative Learning," *The Association of American Colleges and Universities*, (accessed May 2, 2005); available from:

[http://www.aacu.org/integrative\\_learning/pdfs/ILP\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.aacu.org/integrative_learning/pdfs/ILP_Statement.pdf). This statement was developed in conjunction with the national project, Integrative Learning Opportunities to Connect, March 2004.

9 In this model, there is no singular portrait of what field education looks like. This model is still evolving and will need further study to become completely clear. The picture I paint here, therefore is one that has broad contours that eventually will develop more clear shapes when others study this model in more detail.

10 The new campus will be located just four miles from the old campus.

11 Denver Seminary's description of its seminary, (accessed May 06, 2005); available from: <http://www.denverseminary.edu/catalog/index.php?page=9>.

12 Donald Payne (Denver Seminary), interview with the author, May 20, 2003.

13 Donald Payne (Denver Seminary), interview with the author, May 20, 2003.

14 Denver Seminary, "Denver Seminary Core Qualities," (accessed December 03, 2004); available from: <http://www.denverseminary.edu/catalog/index.php?page=14>.

15 The entire listing of people who relate to the field-based learning process is,

"Dr. Terry Burns – Missions Training Center Director (PT)

Dr. Tom Collins – Church Planting Training Center Director (PT)

Rev. Roger Cauthon – Assoc. Counseling Training Center Director (PT)

Ms. Erin Layne – Campus Training Center Director (PT)

Dr. Jan McCormack – Counseling and Chaplaincy Training Centers Director (FT)

Rev. Bob Woolfolk – Urban Training Center Director (PT)

Ms. Hilary Mathews – Admin. Asst." (Telephone interview, May 20, 2003.)

16 Donald Payne (Denver Seminary), interview with the author, May 20, 2003.

17 Donald Payne (Denver Seminary), interview with the author, May 20, 2003.

18 Western Theological Seminary website description of its mission and vision, (accessed December 09, 2004); available from: <http://www.weseternsem.org/mission.html>.

19 Matt Floding (Western Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 26, 2003.

20 Nancy Tatom Ammerman, et al., ed., *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

21 These seven areas are the ministries of: education and faith formation, pastoral care, preaching and worship, leadership and administration, social justice, evangelism and hospitality.

22 Matt Floding (Western Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 26, 2003.

23 Matt Floding (Western Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 26, 2003. All quotes in this paragraph are from this interview.

24 Matt Floding (Western Theological Seminary), interview with the author, June 26, 2003. All quotes in this paragraph are from this interview.

25 Harvard Divinity School website description of their ministry studies: General Policies of the Supervised Field Education," (accessed on December 14, 2004); available from:

<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/oms/fielded/policies.html#AffirmationofDiversityandInclusiveness>.

26 From Dudley Rose's (Harvard University Divinity School) written survey response.

27 Harvard Divinity School website description of their ministry studies: General Policies of the Supervised Field Education,” (accessed on December 14, 2004); available from: <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/oms/fielded/policies.html#AffirmationofDiversityandInclusiveness>.

28 Harvard Divinity School website description of their ministry studies: General Policies of the Supervised Field Education,” (accessed on December 14, 2004); available from: <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/oms/fielded/policies.html#AffirmationofDiversityandInclusiveness>.

29 Mary Taylor Huber and Pat Hutchings, *Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain* (Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2004), 4.

30 Huber, *Integrative Learning*, 4.

31 Huber, *Integrative Learning*, 20.

32 Donald F. Beisswenger, “Field Education and the Theological Education Debates,” *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (1996): 49-58. In this article, Donald F. Beisswenger examines this issue. He begins by summarizing David Kelsey’s analysis, which focuses on one strand of theological education, which he calls “Berlin,” in which, as Beisswenger explains, there are “two discrete areas of theological work: (a) helping students develop an understanding of Christian faith through exposure to persons doing research in biblical, historical, and systematic fields and (b) educating students for church leadership.” (53) David. H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983). Farley first noted this division between classical studies and preparation for leadership. Schools in the first two models may or may not be stuck in this paradigm of fragmentation between classical studies and practical preparation. However, the disciplines in these schools do tend to work somewhat independently of each other.

33 In the current curriculum at CST, for example, students are encouraged to take several arts of ministry courses, such as preaching, concurrently with field education. A recent curriculum revision heightened the degree of coordination between courses taken concurrently with field education.

## Notes

### Appendix H

1 Donald F. Beisswenger, Tjaard A. Hommes, and Doran McCarty, ed., *Theological Field Education: A Collection of Key Resources*, vol. 1 and 2 (Association for Theological Field Education, 1979 and 1984). Volumes One and Two, for example, were published by the Association for Theological Field Education, copyright Doran C. McCarty, in 1984. Donald F. Beisswenger, Tjaard Hommes and Doran C. McCarty edited these volumes. Those volumes include articles clustered into three parts. The first section of articles is on a theoretical base for pastoral theology and field education. The second cluster of articles is on TFE, including structure and design, supervision as education, and supervising supervision. The final section is on theological reflection. These volumes collected the best of what had been written over previous years. This means that in some cases the articles were written long before the publication date of the *Key Resources* Volumes I and II, 1984. Thus the articles included in these important volumes give a rich description of the history of scholarship within TFE. Much of the reflective work done in these articles is not research-based, but includes significant documentation of each field educator-author’s own experiences.

2 Robert T. O’Gorman, Kathleen Talvacchia, and W. Michael Smith, “Teaching from a Community Context: The Role of the Field Educator in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 37, no. 2 (2001): 1-57. Charlotte McDaniel, “Publications by Members of the Association for Theological Field Education: Survey Results,” *Theological Education* 37, no. 2 (2001): 59-70.

3 McDaniel, “Publications,” 59.

4 McDaniel, "Publications," 60.

5 Donald F. Beisswenger, "Field Education and the Theological Education Debates," *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (Autumn, 1996): 49-58. Beisswenger shares the results of a survey that queried field educators on their purposes in TFE. He found that respondents listed integrating academic study with practical issues of ministry as the number one response, followed by developing skills for the work of ministry. The survey was administered in 1993. According to what I have been able to find, his is the only published article about a survey administered to field educators about goals and purposes.

6 Mahan, Jeffrey H. "Problematic Supervision in Seminary Field Education" *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, Volume 17, 1996. Stairs, M. Jean. "A Systemic Comment: A Call to Partnership," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* Volume 17, 1996.

7 An earlier volume of the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* (Volume 14, 1992-93) had an article by Russell F. Seabright on "A Critique of Models of Supervision in Field Education."

8 Donald F. Beisswenger, Tjaard A. Hommes, and Doran McCarty, ed., *Theological Field Education: A Collection of Key Resources*, vol. 2 and 3 (Association for Theological Field Education, 1979). The group of field educators responsible for *Key Resources* took their own initiative, and one of the group, Doran McCarty, held the copyright. Their initiative was impressive for the way it supported and encouraged scholarship. However, the fact that there was no official institutional sponsorship for their work meant that there was no institutional responsibility to carry on that work once they no longer were engaged with the project. This case points to another issue within field education that of mentoring new field educators. While field educators often are generous in offering their time and advice to newcomers, the ATFE has not developed institutional structures to ensure mentoring of scholars beyond the individual initiative of members themselves.

9 Robert T. O'Gorman, Kathleen Talvacchia, and W. Michael Smith, "Teaching from a Community Context: The Role of the Field Educator in Theological Education," *Theological Education* 37, no. 2 (2001): 1-57. Charlotte McDaniel, "Publications by Members of the Association for Theological Field Education: Survey Results," *Theological Education* 37, no. 2 (2001): 59-70. Donald F. Beisswenger, "Field Education and the Theological Education Debates," *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (Autumn, 1996): 49-58. The articles previously cited, do make important contributions to this descriptive task.

10 In July 2004, I received a phone call from Susan Bond, who is serving as interim field education director at Brite Divinity School. She needed information on whether or not most schools were doing background checks of students, and if so, how. She had no source to which she could turn that would provide authoritative and definitive advice on this matter. As far as I know, no one has compiled information on how many programs do background checks, and how they wrestle with associated concerns. Similarly, during the same month, in my work as field educator at CST, I encountered a question about liability issues from a new placement site that I could not answer. So I called Jeffrey Mahan, a senior and trusted colleague at Iliff School of Theology. Both of these illustrations show that potentially volatile issues are being addressed in an *ad hoc* manner. In each of these cases, the field educator would have benefited from a better database and from a more objective analysis of the concerns being raised.

11 Patricia O'Connell Killen, and John de Beer, *The Art of Theological Reflection* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

12 J. H. Mahan, "Problematic Supervision in Seminary Field Education," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 17 (1996): 59-64.

13 James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

14 Later in the dissertation I propose three models for TFE. This section does not introduce those models. Instead, it looks at major goals in strictly educational terms. In contrast, the models I propose each encompass some amount of work that has each of these educational goals. The models are distinguished by the way they focus energy for theological reflection and integrative work.

15 Donald F. Beisswenger, "Field Education and the Theological Education Debates," *Theological Education* 33, no. 1 (Autumn, 1996): 49-58. Beisswenger found that the development of skills was the primary purpose of TFE for 14% of the respondents to his survey.

16 Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander, ed., *The Essential Dewey*, vol. 2, *Ethics, Logic, Psychology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 274. John Dewey explains the importance of integrative work in assimilating facts as well as skills: "Intellectual learning includes the amassing and retention of information. But information is an undigested burden unless it is understood. It is knowledge only as its material is comprehended. And understanding, comprehension means that the various parts of the information acquired are grasped in their relations to one another--a result that is attained only when acquisition is accompanied by constant reflection upon the meaning of what is studied. There is an important distinction between verbal, mechanical memory and what older writers called 'judicious memory.'"

17 John Dewey, *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*, ed. Reginald Archambault (New York: Modern Library, 1964).

18 John Dewey, *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*, ed. Reginald Archambault (New York: Modern Library, 1964).

19 Larry A. Hickman and Thomas M. Alexander, ed., *The Essential Dewey*, vol. 1, *Pragmatism, Education, Democracy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 232. A more extensive quote from Dewey gives the reader a greater sense of how Dewey focused on the relationship between education and experience. He focused on the way that learning occurs when students make meaning, based on social interaction, of their experiences. He puts it this way: "I believe that one of the greatest difficulties in the present teaching of science is that the material is presented in purely objective form, or is treated as a new peculiar kind of experience which the child can add to that which he has already had. In reality, science is of value because it gives the ability to interpret and control the experience already had. It should be introduced, not as so much new subject-matter, but as showing the factors already involved in previous experience and as furnishing tools by which that experience can be more easily and effectively regulated."

20 John Dewey, *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*, ed. Reginald Archambault (New York: Modern Library, 1964).

21 Jack Mezirow, "Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 74 (Summer 1997): 5-12.

22 Mezirow, "Transformative Learning," 5.

23 Patricia Cranton and Kathleen P. King, "Transformative Learning as a Professional Development Goal," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 98, (2003): 31-38.

24 Cranton, "Transformative Learning," 31-38.

25 Cranton, "Transformative Learning," 31-38.

26 Cranton, "Transformative Learning," 31-38. Cranton gives specific strategies for how one develops professionals using transformative processes. My purpose here is not to add to TFE's list of strategies, but to demonstrate that the conceptualization of these various strata of learning, from content reflection to process reflection to premise reflection might serve as useful tools for TFE to critically examine the various strategies already in use, and their purposes. One of Cranton's strategies is the use of case studies, which, she suggests, enable educators to "be guided to recognize the harder questions, to probe unspoken assumptions, and to analyze the consequences of choices and actions. By working in groups to analyze, synthesize, and make recommendation, educators enter a virtual laboratory where they try out new possible responses and enter into dialogue with their partners about meaning, purposes and possibilities."

27 Cranton, "Transformative Learning," 31-38.

28 I use the term director advisedly. I am aware that it carries unfortunate connotations of leadership that is dictatorial. However, my intent is to convey that students are moving into a role that requires them to oversee, coordinate and cooperate with others. This may or may not be done with dictatorial flair. Film directors, for example, keep an eye on the total creative production, but must cooperate and respect the essential work of many partners as they do so. Similarly, I intend to connote the type of leadership that coordinates, respects, leads, but does not necessarily do so oppressively.

29 Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

30 Dudley Rose (Harvard University Divinity School), from transcription of conversation at consultation in Newport Beach, California (March 2004).

31 J.E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences* (San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1981).

32 Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 66-67.

33 Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 71.

34 David Nygren, Miriam D. Ukeritis, David C. McClelland, and Julia L. Hickman, "Outstanding Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations: Leadership Competencies in Roman Catholic Religious Orders," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 4, no. 4 (1994): 375 – 391.

35 Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

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